

Love me if you dare Chapter 41-60

Chapter 41

When Jian Yao opens her eyes, she sees a dark blue sky. There is a new moon, thin and bright, hanging just above the horizon.

She is still in Bo Jinyan's car. The surroundings are familiar. It's the parking lot of their apartment. Bo Jinyan didn't turn on the lights inside the car. Thin yellow light from the street lamps shines through the windows.

Bo Jinyan is sitting on the driver's seat beside her. Looking out from the window.

"What's on your mind?" asks Jian Yao.

Bo Jinyan taps his finger on the dashboard: " 'He didn't appear.' "

Jian Yao knows that Bo Jinyan didn't arrange any surveillance at the crime scene to give 'him' the opportunity to leave a note - that is, if he is still alive. There were a lot of people up on Qi hill peak today. If he wanted to sneak up as a police officers or forensic staff, it would have been very easy.

But there is nothing.

"Is 'he' dead?" Jian Yao asks.

"Maybe."

He turns to look at her.

The interior of the car is very dim. But the shadows accentuate his well-shaped features - his body, his face... His eyes sparkles like stars, looking at her.

It flustered her to have him staring at her. She clears her throat and asks: "What's up?"

"E.T!" He says softly: "We need a new rule. From now on, when we are investigating a case, you must be within my reach 24/7."

Jian Yao: "I understand the second half of the sentence. But the first half. What? E.T?"

"Yea..." Bo Jinyan smiles and opens his car door.

Jian Yao: "Hey...you are the E.T..."

Bo Jinyan walks over to her side. He opens the door and carries her out of the car. He says slowly: "I am not the one with the bump on my forehead."

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By the time they get inside Bo Jinyan's apartment, it's 1am.

Bo Jinyan puts her down on the sofa. He goes into the kitchen and came back with two ice packs.

After he sits down beside her, Bo Jinyan presses one ice pack on her forehead. The bone chilling coldness causes her to gasp. A smile appears on his face: "You hold on to the ice pack."

Jian Yao quietly takes over.

His tenderness towards her was only temporary. Then it's replaced by teasing - ET, bump on the face, seeing how she reacts to the ice pack.... Like a school boy that runs around to pull the girls' ponytails. He is so immature!

But then, he bends down and lifts up her left foot. He removes the shoe, throws it next to the entrance, then rests her foot on his legs.

She blushes, and doesn't dare to move a muscle.

He picks up the other ice pack and places it on top of her left ankle. With his other hand, he points the remote at the TV and starts watching a documentary.

As this other ice pack touches her skin, she gasps again. She notices that although his eyes are glued to the TV, his lips curl with a small smile.

- Well, ok. Tender. And immature.

Jian Yao is not interested in documentaries about criminology. She thinks about today's case.

"Hey." She gently kicks him with the left foot. "You said Huo Xiao Lu's statement was full of loopholes. Explain."

His palm felt her kick. As a reflex action, he grabs her foot with his hand so that she can't move it anymore.

"Remember Wang Wan Wei's suicide note?"

"Yes..." She recalls the details from the case. Bo Jinyan said the suicide note was genuine because it had minor inconsistencies and a distinctive personal style of writing. But fake notes tend to be concise, clear and without flaw.

Following this train of thought, Huo Xiao Lu's statement was more like the latter. But if this is the only reason he based his conclusion on, it might seem a little inadequate.

Bo Jinyan knows what is going through her heart. He says: "The analysis process used for written notes and oral statements are different."

"Oh."

He gives her a glance: "It's simple. When it's comes to verbal communication, human display a lot of the same characteristics regardless of their personality and background."

Jian Yao smiles at him: "Please enlighten me."

Bo Jinyan teases her again: "E.T, now that you've come to Earth, you need to read more. These are basic analytical skills."

"..... I will. Later! Please tell me now."

"Firstly, what guide our memories are emotions, not time sequence." He says.

Jian Yao is waiting for further explanation.

True to Bo Jinyan's words, he does not "mock or look down on people based on their lack of professional knowledge." He patiently explains: "For example. If you are to tell your friend about your fall today, what would you say?"

Jian Yao thinks for a while: "I tumbled down the stairs during an investigation today. I was accidentally pushed down by the murderer's mother. It was a painful fall..."

"Stop." Bo Jinyan interrupts her. "Did you notice? When you recalled the incident, the first thing that came to mind was what you felt was the most important part of the event - you were pushed down by the woman, pain. Because you were led by your emotions, not time sequence."

Jian Yao thinks about it. It's true. She opens her bag and takes out her notebook.

She turns to the girls' statement.

- How did they start?

Huo Xiao Lu - Around 8pm, Huai Huai collected all the money...

Qi Xiao Ran - If I knew something would happen to Huai Huai, I would stay with her...

- Ah... I see.

Bo Jinyan says again: "Their good friend was killed. It would have been a huge emotional blow to all of the girls. Everyone should have very strong feelings about what had happened. But Huo Xiao Lu was too sensible. Her statement starts with time sequence. And it was well rehearsed. She was not recalling the events, but presenting a scenario, one that she wanted us to believe."

Jian Yao nods.

Bo Jinyan continues: "Second point. Huo's statement had lots of mundane details that had very little to do with the case. For liars, details pads out their stories to make it more believable. If she was truly devastated by her friend's death, would she remember and care to tell the police that she washed her clothes and made herself a cup of tea?"

Jian Yao looks at that part of the statement: The seniors are on holiday. The other students are studying... ; made myself a cup of tea...

"Third point." Bo Jinyan says, "The stronger you have feelings for something, the more you feel the urge to conclude. It's an emotional

need to 'wrap up' the feelings. But liars do away with that. Because they feel that once they have explained the incident, their job is done."

Jian Yao is flicking the pages again. She hears Bo Jinyan says: "Yes, check out their concluding statements."

Huo Xiao Lu - Then I made myself a cup of tea, lied on bed to read. After a while, I went to bed.

Qi Xiao Ran - Why would anyone want to kill her... there's college entrance exams next year... but she will never...

— — — — —

Bo Jinyan's apartment is the only house with lights on. The rest of the neighbourhood is fast asleep.

They have watched two episodes of the documentary. Jian Yao has had an hour of ice pack on her foot and forehead. But Bo Jinyan doesn't look tired at all. Jian Yao, on the other hand, can hardly keep her eyes open. She kicks him again. "I need to go home. I am very tired. Thank you for everything."

He looks at her: "Sleep here tonight."

Jian Yao: "...why?"

Bo Jinyan: "What if you need help tonight? Do you expect me to run up to the studio? You sleep in my room. I will take the study. If you need me, just knock on the wall."

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Jian Yao didn't knock on the wall, of course.

After a quick shower, she collapsed on his big bed and falls into a deep sleep, almost immediately.

Bo Jinyan lies on the single bed in the study. Perhaps it's because it's not his usual bed, he is not very used to it. He finds it hard to go to sleep.

He recalls the moments when Jian Yao fell down the stairs.

Dark and narrow stairways. As he rushed out of the unit, all he could see was her body in the air, then the tumble, and the knocks...

Then he hurried to her side, carried her, the look on her pale face, her body lying softly in his arms...

Some unknown sentiment fills and agitates his heart.

He pulls down his sleeping mask. Everything is dark. Time to sleep.

— — —

Jian Yao wakes up after a dreamless night to the bright sunshine coming through the bedroom windows.

She looks at the alarm clock on Bo Jinyan's bedside table. It's past midday.

She touches her left foot. The swell has subsided a bit. The bump on her forehead... is still there. She smiles and gets out of bed.

She slowly makes her way to the lounge. Bo Jinyan is sitting in the sofa in his usual white shirt and black pants, reading newspaper.

When he hears her footsteps, he asks from behind the newspaper: "Do you need to be carried?"

Jian Yao: "... no."

She slowly walks towards the sofa. There's some breakfast left on the coffee table. She picks a piece of bread and starts eating.

No one speaks. After a long pause. Jian Yao asks: "What are we doing today?"

Bo Jinyan puts down his papers briefly, takes a look at her forehead and foot, and says: "Your call."

Jian Yao: "....."

- Man..He has the ability to irritate people with just one sentence. Your call? Yeah, of course. Because she has twisted her ankle. There's nothing they can do anyway.

Chapter 42

Summer is coming to an end. Autumn colours are beginning to appear on trees. Light and refreshing breezes comes through the window into the lounge.

Jian Yao is lying in the sun. There is not much to do.

Bo Jinyan looks very contented with reading his book. Jian Yao is sure that even if he was the only human left in the world, but there are books for him to read, he would be quite happy to live by himself, without missing much of the social aspects of life.

She, on the other hand, is bored. She takes out her notebook from the bag. She wants to read through the 'lesson on verbal communication analysis' from last night. Then she notices the corner of a pink paper sticking out from the bag. The movie tickets.

She sighs.

She didn't expect Bo Jinyan to be able to solve this case in four hours. If it wasn't for her injuries, they could go and watch the movie.

Jian Yao puts the tickets back in her bag. She opens the notebook and starts reading.

After she reads a few pages, she feels someone is looking at her.

She looks up. Bo Jinyan is putting his feet together, and looking thoughtfully at her.

"What's the matter?" She asks.

He gives her a smile. Then he puts the book down and walks into his room, and he closes the door.

Jian Yao has no idea what he is up to.

- His smile. A typical aloof Bo Jinyan's style of smile. Like he is telling her: "Woman, I know you too well." Has he come up with some new but pathetic theories about woman again?

He opens his room door.

Bo Jinyan walks out with his hands in his pockets. Leisurely.

Jian Yao is confused.

He's dressed in his suit. Complete with a tie, a nice white shirt and polished shoes. He's combed his hair nicely too. He is looking very smart in his outfit.

Jian Yao: "Are you going somewhere?"

Bo Jinyan gives her a glance: "No. I changed into my suit to go to bed."

Jian Yao: “.....”

- Can't he just answer her nicely for once?

She decides to ignore him and continue to read her book. It doesn't matter where he is going. She can't tag along anyway.

But he walks over to her and she hears his voice above her head: “How long are you going to make me wait, Ms. Jian?”

Jian Yao looks up. He has extended his hand out towards her. The amber cuffing on his sleeve glints in the light.

“The movie is starting soon.”

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It's the weekend. The cinema is packed and noisy.

Bo Jinyan hates this sort of environment. He frowns as he enters. But when he sees the smile on Jian Yao's face....

- Well, if it makes her happy, it's tolerable, I suppose.

When they walk pass the candy bar, Bo Jinyan takes a look at the queue. They are mostly young man standing in line in a narrow corridor. But their purchases are usually popcorn, energy drinks, preserved plum etc etc... all the snacks that the girls like to eat.

It is so pathetic...

He is about to enter the ticket check area when Jian Yao gives him a nudge: “Go buy some popcorn.”

Bo Jinyan's lips curl - Ah... woman.

He is about to refuse, and comment on her poor taste when... he sees her eyes, like two sparkling jewels on her soft delicate skin.

She gently shakes his arms. "Go on." She asks with a sweet soft voice.

Bo Jinyan stands still for a while. He takes out his wallet and asks: "Just popcorn?"

"Mmm... get some drinks too. I want green tea."

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These so called couple boxes are reasonably sized rooms that can fit around 60 people. There are approximately thirty pink two seater sofas in them. The one Bo Jinyan booked is in the centre of the room.

Bo Jinyan assumed couple boxes are individual rooms with just one sofa in them. He thought there would only be the two of them there. He didn't expect to have to share the room with so many other strangers.

Jian Yao is thrilled though. She says to him: "The seats you reserved are great."

Bo Jinyan takes a look at her. Finally, a smile on his face since he entered the couple box: "Well, of course." He says.

As the lights dims, vibrant images emerge onscreen. Jian Yao is sitting on the sofa. Besides the movie screen, she can see couples cuddling on the sofas.

The sofa is not very wide. The two of them takes up most of the space. Bo Jinyan sits quietly beside her. They are certainly not as intimate as the other couples. Bo Jinyan rests one arm on the back of the sofa above her shoulders.

Jian Yao is so happy that he has decided to accompany her to the movies.

“Thank you.” She says, with her eyes looking at the movie screen. It’s to thank him... for watching a movie with her even though he might find it boring, for looking after her last night, and for patiently leading and guiding her and walking side by side on a journey together.

“Huh?” A slightly confused half hearted response in the dimmed light.

Jian Yao just smiles.

As usual, anything that is romantic cannot be sustained when it comes to Mr. Bo.

After ten minutes of the movie, he starts to get bored. The story still focuses on the relationship between the leads.

He takes out his mobile phone and leans back: “Call me when the aliens start to invade.”

Jian Yao: “....alright.”

Bo Jinyan reads the news, then checks his email. He is about to do a search on Google when he hears everyone else in the room laughs.

He looks up. It’s something to do with the male lead telling the female lead a joke. He takes a look at Jian Yao. She is holding the popcorn with both of her hands, leaning towards him. She seems to be enjoying the movie a lot.

Bo Jinyan smiles and takes out his mobile phone again, to continue with his search.

He presses the return button. He is surprised with the findings.

Instead of the criminal terminology, he accidentally typed 'Jian Yao' because he was looking at her.

He is distracted.

This has never happened before.

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Jian Yao sees a space battleship onscreen.

She taps him in the chest: "You can watch the movie now."

"Yeah..." He is still staring at his mobile screen. With a smile.

Jian Yao subconsciously takes a glance at his screen. Even through the image is blur, it looks kind of familiar.

"What are you looking at?"

Bo Jinyan doesn't try to move his body trying to block her view, but allows her to lean closer so that she can see more clearly what's on the tiny screen.

"This is..." Jian Yao blushes.

Bo Jinyan has a bigger smile on his face.

On his mobile, is a picture of Jian Yao when she was young. It's probably from some kids singing contest. There's even a caption with her name on it.

A little girl is wearing a swan costume, looking very cute and innocent. She was trying hard to stretch out her hands and feet. There's make up on her face too. Thick black eyeliners, two red patch of rouge

on her cheeks. It's hard to tell what she actually looks like under the layer of make up.

Jian Yao takes the mobile phone from him: "I just started primary school. Back then the teachers like 'decorating' the kids this way."

Bo Jinyan: "Mmm... very enchanting."

Jian Yao laughs: "... what?"

As she leaned over to see the picture, she was almost in his arms. She didn't notice that her hair is resting on top of his white shirt. All he needs to do is just to move his neck slightly - and his lips will touch her silky, shiny hair.

In a dimly lit room, a wisp of fragrance lingers. It's Jian Yao. He sniffs her hair.

Jian Yao was just curious about what he was looking at. But suddenly, a thought enters her -

Bo Jinyan searched about her on the internet.

Well, perhaps he was bored. But she decides to get it clarified so she lift up her head and asks: "Why are you 'searching' me?"

Then she freezes in her position.

As she was lifting up her head to speak to him, he was bending down to sniff her hair (of course, Jian Yao was not aware of this). There was hardly any distance between them to start off with, and now, they are looking into each other's eyes with just centimetres between the faces.

She can hear the rhythm of Bo Jinyan's breathing. His breath seems to surround her whole body. Those deep dark eyes, so close to her, are staring steadily at her.

She remembers their 'accidental' kiss. Her heart is pounding. And her body is still. Still... in his arms, still... just centimetres away from his face. She can't decide whether she should move closer, or move away.

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Bo Jinyan is not moving either.

Jian Yao is in his arms. They are so close to one another, their individual breaths seems to fuse together.

He can see her face from the bright rays refracted from the screens. Her clear sparkly eyes, her lovely nose and her pink lips. The wisp of her humid breath escapes from her mouth into his nostrils. A distinctive floral feminine scent.

Bo Jinyan feels that deep within him, a gust of hot air is silently surging.

An imaginary bright light seems to have shined into and illuminated his mind.

He remembers the time when Jian Yao's fingers gently touched his skin, the unusually ticklish but nice sensation. He remembers whenever he sees her, the joy that he feels. He remembers the day when she wore the sleeveless yellow dress, the way he looked at her delicate skin, her neck, collarbone, shoulders, arms... It's the same feeling as he has now - his hormones are raging.

He also remembers the moment he saw her fell down the stairs. The burning pain in his chest. It is as if his heart were contracting.

That moment, all the thoughts came together at once. The pieces of the puzzle finally put in their place.

He slightly lowers his eyes and looks at this woman.

In the dimmed room, his puckers his lips, and leans his face towards her.

“Buzzzzzz” A rapid pulse is coming from her pocket.

Bo Jinyan is startled by the buzz. Jian Yao moves back to retrieve her phone in the pocket.

The ambiguity between them quickly dissipates.

Bo Jinyan sits silently. His eyes are fixed on her.

Jian Yao’s heart was beating so fast that she thought she would collapse. It was only a short moment but it felt like it lasted for a whole century. She doesn’t know if what just happened was only her illusion. Does Bo Jinyan really have no feelings for her? Or can he also feel... an undercurrent of passion between them?

So, when the phone rang, she instinctually leaned back.

She feels both relieved and disappointed. But she feels that she needs to clear her head first.

She tries to remain calm. She lowers her voice and takes the incoming call: “Hello?”

Li Xunran’s familiar voice appears on the other end: “I’m in B City.”

Jian Yao is surprised. She smiles: “Give me a moment.” She turns to Bo Jinyan: “I am going outside to take a call.”

The lights dies out on the screen. She can’t see Bo Jinyan’s expression. But she can hear a soft “Yah.” from him.

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Jian Yao is not fully recovered yet. She walks slowly into the corridor. She takes a deep breath.

Li Xunran hears her 'loud' breathing and asks: "Is everything ok?"

"Yes yes." She says with a smile: "You said you are in town."

Li Xunran answers with a smile too: "Yip, just landed."

It's been a long time since they caught up with one another. The last time Jian Yao tried to call, he didn't answer his phone. Jian Yao found out from her mom later that he was away investigating a big case, and he's not allowed to contact anyone.

Two months ago, Li Xunran gave her a call to say he is fine. He's busy, and tired. That was the day she started to work in the Central Police Station. Since then, both of them were busy with their respective jobs, and they hadn't spoken to each other since.

She didn't expect him to be in B City.

"I'm going to be here for a few days. There's a conference at the National Securities Office. Tomorrow is Sunday. I am free. Make sure you don't have any other plans."

Jian Yao laughs: "Yes, Dictator."

"You should know me better by now." He says, "I borrowed a car. I will pick you up from your apartment tomorrow."

"Ok."

They chat for a while. When Jian Yao mentions she is now starting to investigate cases, Li Xunran was very happy for her. He says boastfully: "I knew I had a positive influence on you."

When she ends the call, she realises they have chatted for more than half an hour.

Jian Yao still has a smile on her face. When she turns around, she sees a familiar tall figure standing in the corridor, not too far from her.

It's Bo Jinyan. Jian Yao doesn't know when did he come out from the couples box.

Jian Yao walks over. Trying to look 'normal' while she says to him: "I'm sorry. It's Li Xunran. It's been a long time since we spoke, so I got a bit carried away."

He sweeps her a glance: "That's ok. I've just been neglected for half an hour."

Jian Yao is both slightly annoyed and amused: "Sorry, sorry. Let's go in."

Bo Jinyan curls his lips, and gives her his hand as a support: "No. let's go."

Jian Yao wonders: "Why? The alien battleship has begun its attack, right?" It's the action bits that he is after.

Bo Jinyan says slowly: "I am thinking of something that is very important."

Jian Yao looks at him. He looks so serious. Perhaps it's something to do with 'him'?

She asks softly: "What is it? Is there anything I can do to help?"

Bo Jinyan pauses his steps. He looks at her.

"I will definitely tell you, soon."

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When they get back to the apartment, Jian Yao suggests that she will sleep in her own studio tonight. Her foot is better, and it will be easy when Li Xunran comes over tomorrow morning.

Her injuries are better, so Bo Jinyan does not insist that she stays with him anymore.

Jian Yao asks him if he wants to accompany Li Xunran for sightseeing tomorrow.

Bo Jinyan seems to be still thinking about this 'very important matter'. He answers grumpily: "Why would I want to spend time sightseeing with him?"

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Jian Yao is lying in bed. She lets out a long sigh.

She still believes Bo Jinyan has no feelings for her. Perhaps at that moment, he was perplexed about what she wanted to do.

Even when they did kiss last time... well, the lips touched.... he can leisurely say to her he won't let her future boyfriend know about it.

What expectations can she have?

- Stop thinking! Actually their relationship is not too bad at the moment.

But...

She takes out the photo from her drawer. She looks at his quiet but pale face.

Bo Jinyan, will I ever get into your heart?

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Bo Jinyan fell asleep quite quickly tonight. Perhaps it's because something good happened today?

Then he dreamed. A series of dreams.

In the first dream, he was a young boy. His mother was cuddling him by the river, fishing. He can't recall what mom looks like, but he remembers her to have a warm and gentle voice, and nice facial features.

Then it changed to after he returned to China. The first time he saw Jian Yao.

She was holding a fishing rod, sitting by the river. Beautiful, slim and gentle.

He loves eating fish, but he has no patience for fishing. Whenever his mom was fishing, he would play around in the wood. When he returns, the basket will be full of fish.

Although mom is no longer around, he would still cast the rod into the river and walk off. But this time, she picked up his fishing rod, and filled it with fish.

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Then, he dreamt about what happened today.

Jian Yao and him are in the cinema again. But in his dream, the movie screen only shows the action bits. There is no boring romance scenes.

She is resting in his arms, looking up into his eyes.

He smiles, and takes out her mobile phone from her pocket. He throws it away, to the far corner of the room, and then he bends down, and kisses her.

Her lips are as soft as he expected them to be. Her floral and sweet scent, lingering in his mouth. His hands are holding her face, they gently kiss, and kiss, and kiss.

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The slightly chaotic dream suddenly halts in his mind.

He opens his eyes. He is awake.

He switches on his bedside lamp. He sits up and looks at himself in the mirror. There's still the same smile that he had in his dreams.

He gets out of bed and pours himself a glass of water. There is an even bigger smile.

The dream was so real. Well, a lot of them were events that actually happened in his life... except for the kiss.

Sigmund Freud once said, the human brain has the capacity to add and subtract things to their dreams, therefore most dreams can be quite far from reality.

But if dream and reality is closely similar to one another, there are two possibilities:

1. He is too tired both physically and mentally, therefore, the ability to alter his dreams is reduced.
2. There is a strong desire that has been repressed for a long time. But now it's released.

Chapter 43

Sunday morning. It's a bright day. A layer of thin airy clouds lines the pale blue skies.

Last night, Bo Jinyan was too excited to sleep, like he had too much energy that can't be burnt off. Finally, he is conscious of the depth of his feelings for her. He put on some music, and opened a bottle of red wine to celebrate. He changed into his shirt and trousers, and sat down. Faint moonlight seeps through the window. He remembered the wonderful times they have spent together in the past nine months, every detail.

If someone was to see his face, they would think this man looked confident, yet, calm and mysterious at the same time. This was because he was wearing an enigmatic smile on his face. And this smile has been on his face for hours.

But in fact....

He was extremely pleased with himself. Even though he did not realise how much he liked Jian Yao, he had successfully attracted her to be by his side, as if he was a prophet, and knew this would eventually happen. And he managed to keep her exclusively for himself.

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Fu Ziyu used to laugh at him for the lack of experience in this area. So what? Obviously he is a genius in this field as well.

Now, all he needs to do is to make sure this woman only has eyes for him, and totally commits to him.

To fall in love with him, enjoy his company, experience the best in life, indulge in their passion, marry him, spend their days together, hug him, kiss him, travel the world together - Paris, the Caribbean, Zurich, Istanbul, the South Pole... watching Jian Yao standing in different backdrops smiling sweetly at him... must be a marvellous feeling.

- Oh.... It's so exciting just thinking about it. Bo Jinyan wants to run up to her studio right now and wrap her in his arms.
- Jian Yao, you are mine. "Bo Jinyan's lover." This identity is perfect for you.

He looks at the night lights, and enjoys his wine.

See you tomorrow, my love.

— — — — —

What if....

Jian Yao doesn't like him?

Sorry, perhaps it is a question that causes concern or anxiety for a normal guy, it is not a thought that ever occurred for Mr. Bo Jinyan.

He only needs to know he likes her. He wants to get her. That's enough.

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After spending the whole night thinking about his late blossoming first love, he didn't fall asleep until late at night.

When he opens his eyes in the morning, it's past 10am.

He frowns, then takes a stretch.

His original plan is to buy her breakfast, then surprise her at her studio. Well, too late for that. Change it to lunch then.

He calls a nice restaurant in the neighbourhood reserves a booking for two.

After shower, he carefully chooses what he will be wearing today. He even picks up a tie with bright colours, to suit his mood.

And he even uses the skincare Jian Yao bought for him.

If she wants to savour his scent - he will be happy to oblige.

11.00am

Bo Jinyan is standing in front of Jian Yao's house. He presses on the door bell.

"Ding Dong-"

"Ding Dong-"

No answer.

Then he remembers. Jian Yao said she will be going out with Li Xunran today.

But in Bo Jinyan's mind, sightseeing is an activity that doesn't take very long. She will be back soon. He thought.

But....

He looks at the closed door. Jian Yao will not be coming back to have lunch with him.

The first time he is pursuing a girl.... and he misses out.

Jian Yao is having lunch with Li Xunran and a few of his colleagues at a restaurant that specialises in roast duck.

Li Xunran has been to B City a few times now, but it's the first visit for some of his colleagues. Jian Yao insists that she must shout them a meal, as a good host would.

She looks at the menu. The other colleagues are chatting and smoking cigarettes. Li Xunran rests his hand on the back of her chair. She picks a few of her favourite dishes.

When a woman has someone on her mind, she is always thinking about that person. After giving the orders to the waiter, she takes out her mobile phone and texts Bo Jinyan:

"Remember to have some lunch."

Li Xunran picks up his cigarette, takes a look at her sitting the sun. Her gaze is gentle, and her skin is soft and supple.

After she puts down her phone, Li Xunran quietly laughs: "Who are you sending a text to? So pre-occupied when you are spending time with me... your boyfriend?"

Jian Yao: "No... don't have one."

Her phone rings. The caller displays has “Bo Jinyan” on it.

He’s calling her.

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Just before he received Jian Yao’s text, he was watching TV.

Another documentary on ... criminology :)

After finishing the episode. He switched it off. He notices a takeaway box on the coffee table. He frowns. He is not in interested in fast food.

He looks at his mobile phone.

He picks it up and walks to the window. He is just about to call Jian Yao when he sees a new text message.

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He smiles.

- Ahshe is thinking of me.

He calls her number.

“I will have lunch soon.” He leans his body towards the window. He looks out to the clear blue sky, and speaks with husky voice: “When are you coming back?”

Jian Yao is in noisy restaurant. She can’t pick the difference in his tone.

But the fact that he asked when she will be back is enough to make her smile. So she answers sweetly: “I am having roast duck with them. I might be a little late today. What’s up?”

There is no way the arrogant Bo Jinyan will confess his love for her over the phone in such a hasty fashion. Besides there's a lot of people around her.

He is quiet for a moment. Then he says politely: "Enjoy your meal."

Jian Yao: "Ok.... you too."

She puts down the phone and finds Li Xunran looking at her suspiciously, with a sly smile.

She blushes. Then she pushes him: "What are you smiling about..?"

— — — —

The plans are deferred once more. Bo Jinyan has nothing to do. He calls the central police station to schedule the remaining work he needs to do for Huo Xiao Lu's case.

Then a thought comes to his mind. He calls Fu Ziyu: "Come out for dinner."

A clear and bright night in B City. People are enjoying themselves and relaxing in bars and restaurants after a hard week's work.

Fu Ziyu arrives at the restaurant to see Bo Jinyan sitting alone in the private dining room. The look on his face.... well, perhaps narcissism is not quite the right word to describe it, but he is certainly in a good mood. A subtle smile radiates on his face.

"Where's Jian Yao?" asks Fu Ziyu. "Why is she not with you today?"

Bo Jinyan simply answers: "There's no hurry."

- That's a strange answer...

Fu Zuyi sits down and pours himself a glass of water. He sips a bit:
“Anything happened to you recently?”

Bo Jinyan looks at him. His eyes gleam.

“I have fallen in love with Jian Yao.”

Fu Ziyu gags, and the water in his mouths is sprayed all over the table.

Chapter 44

Bo Jinyan looks calmly at his friend whose face is red because of the gag.

It took a while for Fu Ziyu to calm down and manages to breath properly again. He says: “You finally discovered.”

Bo Jinyan sweeps him a glance, his finger tapping on his trousers:
“Sooner.. Later... Does it matter?”

Anyway, she belongs to him.

Fu Ziyu looks at his proud friend.... He has always been a sore loser.

But he is still very happy for the two of them. After being in so many relationships himself, he knows that letting their relationship progress naturally is the best way forward. Things like match making or forcing them to date would have been a waste of time.

He lifts his glass: “Congratulations!”

Bo Jinyan lifts up his and they clink their glass together.

“Thank you.”

Fu Ziyu asks: "How are you going to confess your love for her?"

Bo Jinyan: "I already have a plan."

— — — — —

The autumn night is brisk and cool.

When Bo Jinyan gets back to the neighbourhood, it's past 8:00pm. He looks up to Jian Yao's studio from the carpark. There is no light coming from her window.

He gives her a call.

Jian Yao is in Li Xunran's car. The others have gone back to the hostel. Li Xunran is driving her home.

"What's up?" Jian Yao smiles as she answers his call. Li Xunran is giving her a crafty smile.

"When are you coming back?" Bo Jinyan asks in his rich masculine voice. "I have something to tell you,"

Jian Yao looks at the road sign they are passing, and answer: "Within the hour."

When a woman spends a lot of time with a man with low EQ, she will subconsciously rub off from him. So even though Bo Jinyan said "I have something to tell you." in a gentle voice, it will be interpreted by Jian Yao as "I have some new thoughts on the case." or "I am bored, come back so that I can talk to you."

"Ok." Bo Jinyan smiles. "I will come around to your studio later."

"But..." Li Xunran is coming to my place too. We have plans - Jian Yao didn't get to finish her sentence. Bo Jinyan has hung up.

Bo Jinyan looks at the row of shops on the opposite side of the street. One of them is a flower shop. It is still open for business.

He walks over. Actually, it has just past their business hours and the shop assistant is about to close the shop. She is happy to see a handsome man walks in. She has a big smile on her face: "Hi there. How can I help you? We have some flowers selling at half price."

"I don't need any discount." He answers. He is standing in the middle of the shop. His eyes are scanning through all the beautiful flowers there.

.... Mmmm.. He knows nothing about flowers and flower languages.

He asks the shop assistant to tell him the meaning of all the flowers.

The shop assistant is stunned. But she is quick on her feet. She chooses about ten of the popular types of flower (which happens to be the most expensive ones of course) and explains to him what they represent.

When she gets to the moth orchids, the handsome man in the suit stops her: "This one please."

The shop assistant has a huge smile on her face: "A good choice!"

Bo Jinyan takes the bouquet. He has a smile on his face too.

The funny shaped little flowers have a beautiful meaning -

I love you. May happiness and blessing come to you.

— — — — —

It only took Jian Yao and Li Xunran half an hour to get back to her apartment.

Li Xunran wants to visit a bar in town later. So they decide to freshen up at Jian Yao's studio first. As for Bo Jinyan.... Well, she will tell him of their plans when she sees her. Jian Yao thinks to herself.

And... it will be nice to see him. She hasn't seen him for a whole day. She misses him.

Li Xunran wants to know more.

He comes out from the shower. He is wearing a white singlet, showing off his well toned and shapely body. He takes the towel Jian Yao passes to him. He leans towards the sofa and dries his hair: "Tell me, are you a couple with Professor Bo yet? Will I be getting an invitation to your wedding banquet soon?"

Jian Yao blushes.

They are friends since childhood, there are no secrets between them. Even though they don't spend much time together nowadays, she knows in her heart that nothing will change their friendship.

She doesn't hide it from him. She is just shy about it.

"We haven't even started." She answers. "He only has room for work in his mind."

Li Xunran stops drying his hair and look at her sideways. Jian Yao looks at him. He looks calm. Soon, a smile appears on his face. He ruffles her hair and says: "I have a feeling the two of you will be very happy together."

It's not often that he speaks such serious and sentimental words. Jian Yao is very touched. She smiles and answers: "Hope you are right."

Both of them take a seat on the sofa. Jian Yao tells Li Xunran about Bo Jinyan - the touching moment, the sweet moment, the tired moments, the frustration of not seeing the relationship going anywhere...

She also asks if Li Xunran has a girlfriend yet. He just laughs: "I'm still young. And it's hard to find a woman who is hungry for love like you within the police force."

Jian Yao laughs: "Hey! Stop hassling me."

At the end of the conversation, LI Xunran knows what is bothering her heart. He says to her: "You want to know if Professor Bo is interested in you? That's easy. When he comes afterwards, we will test him. Let's pretend there's something between us. Perhaps he will get jealous. A conceited man like him needs a little provoking."

But to his surprise. Jian Yao shakes her head: "No."

She knows Li Xunran means well. But what if he is not interested in her and doesn't care...

But this is not the mainreason.

She doesn't want to provoke him. She doesn't want to force him into any action. She doesn't want him to misunderstand. She didn't want him to feel uneasy.

She just wants things to progress naturally. She doesn't mind the wait.

She wants Bo Jinyan to feel comfortable about their relationship.

Li Xunran sees the look on her face. He knows what is in her mind. He sighs: "You are too nice to him!"

— — — — —

At this time, Bo Jinyan is sitting on the sofa in his apartment. He is holding the bunch of moth orchids in his hands. Waiting.

It's a still and silent night. Stars are twinkling in the velvety black sky. For Bo Jinyan, even the stars look brighter and nicer tonight. He notices Chen Mo is slowly crawling out from under the sofa. As he passes by, his shiny shell reflects the light from the ceiling.

Bo Jinyan lifts his brows: "Come here."

When Chen Mo is at his feet, Bo Jinyan looks at the moth orchids in his hand. He chooses the stem with the most beautiful flower on it, and threw the rest of on the sofa.

He ties the flower on Chen Mo's back with a small piece of string.

"Crawl."

Chen Mo slowly moves, the flower gently sways as he crawls forward.

Bo Jinyan smiles. There is a saying in Chinese: "Train an army for a thousand days for one day's battle."

- Chen Mo, this is your moment to shine! Today, you are helping Bo Jinyan to confess his love, it's a task that you will be proud of for the rest of your life.

He picks up the turtle and opens the front door.

A brightly lit corridor.

Outside Jian Yao's apartment. Bo Jinyan is standing here for the second time today. And Chen Mo is 'in position' not far away from Jian Yao's door.

When she opens the door, he will bend down and kiss her.

Then Chen Mo will come over with the flower, and he will give it to the woman he loves.

Good. Perfect.

“Ding Dong... Ding Dong...”

Bo Jinyan has a half smile on his face. He is resting one hand on the door frame, looking forward to see the person who is about to appear before him.

The door gradually opens.

A man in singlets and shorts is standing in front of him. Bo Jinyan notices his tanned and toned chest.

The smile on his face freezes.

Even though Jian Yao asked Li Xunran not to ‘help’ her, Li is not really listening to her. He says causally: ‘Professor Bo, how are you? Yao Yao is having a shower. Would you like to come in first?’

- Yao Yao? Who gave him permission to dress like that in her house? And to call her Yao Yao?

Bo Jinyan sweeps him a glance, and walks in.

The door closes behind him. The corridor is quiet once again. The lights are still bright, but there is no one there anymore. Except... for a turtle, with a flower tied to his shell.

He who has a great responsibility... is forgotten by his master.

After a while, Chen Mo starts crawling towards the corner. There’s a little hole there that looks like a great resting place for a turtle. Then he

heard some footsteps. To 'protect' himself, Chen Mo decides to retreat back into its shell.

A tall man appears in the corridor. He is wearing a nicely ironed shirt, trousers and a pair black leather shoes. He stands in front of Chen Mo. He chuckles, then bends down and take the flower that's tied to Chen Mo. He puts the flower with soft purple petals in his hand.

He is wearing a pair of disposable latex gloves. His long slender fingers crush the flower, then crumple it and throw it into the rubbish bin that is next to him.

Then he turns around. He looks down and sees Chen Mo in his way. He does not hesitate to kick him to the corner.

He starts humming a tune and disappears down the stairs.

— — —

Inside Jian Yao's apartment.

Jian Yao comes out from the bathroom to see Li Xunran standing by the window with a smile on his face. And in the sofa, a tall man is sitting there in his suit.

Even though Jian Yao is aware that Bo Jinyan likes wearing his suit, but during summer he seldom dresses so formally unless there is an important occasion.

Not only is he dressed formally, he has a very solemn look on his face.

Jian Yao asks: "You said you have something to tell me. Is it related to the case? Is it urgent? I am planning to go out with Li Xunran tonight."

Bo Jinyan is quiet for a moment.

Jian Yao is wearing a long dress. Her damp hair drapes over her shoulders. She is looking at him with her sparkly eyes. And Li Xunran is looking at him too.

Li Xunran. Bo Jinyan remembers him. He is the competent police officer. He seems to be a good friend of Jian Yao's. But perhaps they are more than just friends? Otherwise, based on Jian Yao's personality, she will not let men dressed like that in her house at this time of the night.

Hmmm....

He takes a look at Li Xunran, then turns to look at Jian Yao, and says to them: "Yao Yao's friend is my friend. Let's all go together."

Chapter 45

It is a pleasant autumn night. The evening is cool, but comfortable. Beneath the stars and moon, the three of them walks toward a bar situated next to the lake in the city.

Jian Yao is standing in front of the white railings by the lake. On her left is Li Xunran, on her right, Bo Jinyan. Both of them are tall and handsome. And both of them seem to want to walk beside her all the time so she is 'clipped' in the middle between the two of them.

Actually, it is not a bad thing - her best friend, and the man she adores, both by her side on a beautiful night.

Of course, if Li Xunran would drop that cunning smile of his, and Bo Jinyan does not have that solemn look on his face, that would have been perfect.

A few people are holding water lanterns and walking towards the water edge. Bo Jinyan seems to be interested in what they are doing. He follows them for a closer look.

As Bo Jinyan walks away, Jian Yao uses this opportunity to talk to Li Xunran: "I told you I don't need your help."

Li Xunran playfully hits her head and says: "Don't be afraid. I know what I am doing. Your happiness is of utmost importance to me."

Bo Jinyan walks back. He asks them: "What are you chatting about?" Jian Yao is about to speak, but Li Xunran starts before her: "We are chatting about Yao Yao's love life."

"Oh... love life?" Bo Jinyan looks at her, with an unusual smile on his face.

Li Xunran answers: "A few of my colleagues are interested in her after working together on the 'killer machine' case. They have asked me to find out if they have a chance." He turns to Jian Yao: "So, what do you think?"

Jian Yao don't know what to say. She doesn't want to make Li Xunran to look bad in front of Bo Jinyan, so she just replies: "Let's talk about this later."

Bo Jinyan raises his brows and looks sharply at her.

"For a good lady, it's the quality of the suitors that is important, not quantity."

- Oh... another opinion on love from him.

Li Xunran is not letting go of this great opportunity: "Professor Bo, you are her senior. If you know of any fine young man, you should

introduce them to Jian Yao. Her mom is quite concerned as well. She is always talking to me about it.”

Jian Yao is getting more and more embarrassed. What if he says - I don't care about pathetic matters like these?”

But his response is different from what Jian Yao has expected. He smiles and says: “Fine young man? Of course I can introduce someone. He is outstanding. As long as she wants a boyfriend.” He looks at her warmly as he ‘hints’ to Jian Yao.

But of course, Jian Yao misunderstands him again. She heart sinks when she heard this.

He wants to introduce someone else to her...

She gives a faint smile: “Let not talk about this anymore. I am not looking for a boyfriend at the moment.”

This statement caused Bo Jinyan’s smile to freeze. But again, Jian Yao is too heavy hearted to notice.

Li Xunran looks at the both of them. The smile on his face has never left him.

— — — — —

They walk for a little longer and come to the entrance of a bar. The bar is situated in the middle of an island in the lake. The setting looks very nice. Jian Yao asks: “Should we go inside?”

“Ok.” replies Li Xunran.

Jian Yao takes a look at Bo Jinyan. She doesn’t even want to smile to him.

Bo Jinyan looks like he has something on his mind too. He simply answers: "If Yao Yao wants to go, let's go there."

Jian Yao: "...ok." Bo Jinyan quickly walks ahead of them. She can't help but smile.

- What is the matter with him today? Yao Yao? He doesn't want to miss out because he hears Li Xunran call her that? He is such a big kid! But he is so cute that you can't stay mad at him for long.

The three of them take a seat.

It is an open air bar and is built on the flatten ground of the small island. The sofas lounge area is right by the waterside. Quiet and nice. They find a nice spot that can look out the lotus leaves clustering on the surface of the water. A relaxing atmosphere.

Jian Yao and Bo Jinyan are sitting side by side. Li Xunran takes a seat that faces them. A waiter comes and takes their order: "What would you like to drink today?"

Bo Jinyan: "A Margarita for me."

Li Xunran nods. Then tells the waiter: "Give me a dozen beers." The waiter asks the lady: "What about you, miss?" He hands over the drinks menu to her.

As she is about to take it...

Bo Jinyan: "She will have the same as me."

Li Xunran: "She will have the same as me."

Both of them speak out together.

All four of them are stunned.

Li Xunran laughs and tells Bo Jinyan: "Here's something you might not be aware of. Jian Yao can drink like a fish. A tiny glass of cocktail is nothing to her."

Jian Yao: "Hey...!"

It's true that she has a high tolerance for alcohol. She inherited it from her father. She hardly drinks, but it's a special day today. It's not often she sees Li Xunran. So she feels she should keep him company. So she says to the waiter: "I'll have beer too."

Bo Jinyan looks at her, but he doesn't say anything.

Five minutes later.

The night is beautiful. There's soft mellow music in the background. The breeze is softly blowing to their faces the faint refreshing-smell from the lotus plants.

Bo Jinyan is wearing his suit, looking tall and smart in the red velvet sofas. He is holding a glass of blue Margarita in his hand.

This is not what Bo Jinyan has in his mind. He thought the two of them (Jian Yao and him, of course) will be sitting quietly, side by side, clinking their tall glasses together. She will lean on him and whisper softly into his ears, while he savours her floral feminine scent... And of course, when he was designing this scene in his mind, he had forgotten that Li Xunran is with them.

But it seems he is the one that is sitting by himself, while Jian Yao and Xunran are chatting and drinking beer together.

Though he is not too happy, he quietly observes them. Jian Yao looks and behaves differently today.

In the soft lighting, Jian Yao lifts her hand to tuck her hair behind her ears. He watches her... the lovely fingers holding the beer bottle, the mouth that slowly drinks the beer. There is this tough side about her when she tries to act like one of the boys.

Bo Jinyan smiles.

There are many sides to a person. The Jian Yao beside him reminds him of the Jian Yao who bravely hit the glass of the fish tank with a stick to stop the murderer; and the Jian Yao that doesn't hesitate to risk her life to help the mom who almost fell down the stairs.

Oh....

She is not just a little sheep, but within her, she possesses the strength of a small cow.

She is so cute.

While Bo Jinyan is 'entertaining' himself with thoughts, Jian Yao and Li Xunran is talking about their childhood stories.

One of the patrons walks up to the little stage in the front. They hear him say: "This song is for my girlfriend..."

Everyone claps. Jian Yao puts down her bottle of beer. She looks at Li Xunran. "Are you going to go up to the stage?"

Li Xunran says: "If you ask nicely, I'll sing for you."

Jian Yao: "It's a sincere request."

Li Xunran stands, takes a bow at her: "Yes Madam!" and walks up to the stage after the song is finished.

Jian Yao leans back on the sofa. She seems to hear Bo Jinyan muffles a snort of dissent.

“Is he a good singer?” He asks.

Jian Yao answers: “Yes, he is.”

The lights dim on stage. Li Xunran is sitting on a bar stool, and tell the DJ what song he wants to sing.

Jian Yao asks Bo Jinyan: “Do you....sing?”

She has never heard him sing a whole song. He whistles sometimes when he is in a good mood.

Bo Jinyan says slowly: “Why do I have to sing?”

Jian Yao laughs. Perhaps.... he is tone deaf.

She takes out her mobile and sends Fu Zuyi a text message: “What’s Bo Jinyan’s singing like?”

The reply is quick: “I have never heard anyone that sings more horribly than him. Believe me. Do not try. It will be a disaster.”

Jian Yao laughs out aloud.

Bo Jinyan leans over to her: “What are you laughing about?”

“Oh, nothing.” She says. Then she feels his hand over her shoulders. She can hear his breathing in her ears. Then she hears him say: “Let me see.”

Jian Yao quickly puts her phone in her bag.

Music starts. Both of them look up. The handsome Li Xunran has a smile on his face. He picks up the microphone from the stand and speaks into it: "This song is dedicated to my best friend, and her good friend." He continues "To their happiness, and I hope everyone here enjoys this song."

A handsome man always attracts attention. The whole bar cheers and claps.

Jian Yao feels very touched. He is like a big brother to her.

"Another spring since we said goodbye, my memory melts like snow..." LI Xunran starts singing. He does have a great voice. Everyone is impressed.

There seems to be hints of sadness in his voice. But it suits the mood of the song.

She turns around to look at Bo Jinyan. He is also listening intently. And his arm is still around her.

Jian Yao blushes.

- Perhaps it's comfortable to rest his arms there. Perhaps he is just resting his arm there like she is a piece of furniture?

Ugh....

Bo Jinyan picks up his glass of cocktail, and sips a mouthful.

Jian Yao has never tried a Margarita before. She asks him: "Is it nice?" "Why don't you try?" He holds the glass to her lips.

"...Ok." She takes a sip.

Bo Jinyan looks at her. He smiles.

“How is it?” He asks slowly.

Jian Yao answers: “It’s quite nice.” Then she sees him taking a sip too. From her angle, his lips are touching the spot where she drank from.

“Yes... it’s nice.” He says faintly.

Her heart beats faster.

Does he realises....

- Surely he didn’t know that would qualify as an ‘indirect kiss’. He is used to eating food from her plate. It’s already a habit of his.

She tries not to overthink the issue and concentrates on enjoying Li Xunran’s song.

Bo Jinyan puts down the glass and his lips curls into a smile.

As Jian Yao correctly thought, he has no idea what an ‘indirect kiss’ is. What he just did was purely out of instinct. She drank from his cup. It seems her fragrance is left on the part of the glass her lips touched, which matched the smell he remembered from his dream where he was kissing her.

So....

I am warming up.... Jian Yao.

— — — — —

Li Xunran has finished singing. There are sounds of encore all over the bar. Li Xunran puts down the microphone and walks back to the seat.

As he approaches, he sees the two of them leaning together. His arm causally drapes over her shoulders. Jian Yao's cheeks are blushing and Bo Jinyan is looking at her, with a gentle smile on his face.

It seems

He has been 'made redundant'.

He takes a seat. The three of them are quietly listening to patrons singing.

Bo Jinyan notices a sightseeing boat in the lake. He asks the others: "Would you like a boat ride?"

The others didn't object, so Bo Jinyan stands up and tells them: "I'll organise. I'll let you know when it's ready." He doesn't wait for their reply and walks off quickly.

Jian Yao looks at him disappearing around the corner. She is a little surprise.

- Why is he so keen?

Perhaps he loves boats. There can't be any other explanation.

Li Xunran also stands up and tell Jian Yao: "It's time for me to go."

Jian Yao is surprised again: "Now?"

Li Xunran says: "Well, in a beautiful and romantic night like this, three is a crowd. Bye, Jian Yao. I'll bet anything... he is definitely interested in you. I can guarantee that."

"What are you talking about...? I wanted to spend some time with you today. Don't go." She stands up too.

“Don’t follow me.” says Li Xunran. “Or else he won’t be able to find you. I have a whole day of seminars ahead of me tomorrow. I’ll be in touch.” He waves his hand and leaves.

— — — — —

There are lots of boats by the shore. Bo Jinyan stands at the pier and chooses the one he likes. He walks toward the boat.

The owner of the boat is happy to see some business coming to him. He walks up to Bo Jinyan and says: ‘Sir, would you like to take a cruise? I’ll start when we have six passengers. Fifty dollars per person.’

Bo Jinyan curls his lips: “I want the boat all to myself. But....”

The owner is very happy: “Yes...”

“I need to make some adjustments.”

“Oh...” says the owner.

Five minutes later.

Bo Jinyan and the owner stand in an almost empty cabin. The owner says to him: “Is this ok?” There are only three chairs left in the cabin.

Bo Jinyan takes a look. He asks the owner to put two chairs side by the side and moves the third chair to a corner far away.

“How about this?” asks the owner.

Bo Jinyan smiles and gives him a nod.

He then calls Jian Yao.

"You can come to the pier now." He says.

Jian Yao answers: "I am at the pier. Li Xunran just left.... Do we still want to go ahead with the cruise? Or should we go home?"

Bo Jinyan is quiet for a moment, then he says: "That's perfect."

Jian Yao: "Huh...?"

"Just stay where you are. I'll come and get you." He turns to the owner of the boat and tells him: "You can remove that chair by the corner too. It's not necessary anymore."

Jian Yao senses that Bo Jinyan is acting very strangely today. She can't put her finger on it, but it seems there's a purpose for following them all night. What is it? Is he observing her and Li Xunran for some sort of behavioural research?

She continues to walk on the wooden decks of the pier. There's a few tourists around. She sees a few boats moored nearby. A few of the boat men are resting, some of them shouting out to her to see if she wants to go on a cruise.

She smiles and politely declines. She keeps walking forward and looks out for Bo Jinyan.

Then she sees a wooden lacquered boat quietly parked by the dock.

The moon reflects on the water. Bo Jinyan is standing on the front deck of the boat.

It's like a courtship scene from a romance novel.

Bo Jinyan stands with his hands in the pockets of his trousers.

Tall, and handsome, starring at her with eyes that are gleaming.

This is like a dream.

Suddenly, Jian Yao has this feeling. He is waiting for her. He is standing there for her. Perhaps he has feeling for her too.

But this is too good to be true. Can this be possible?

Then Bo Jinyan reaches out his hand to her. He looks into her eyes and says with his low and magnetic voice:

“This is the moment I’ve been waiting for.”

(Side Story - The master of love)

One day, Fu Ziyu had a fight with his girlfriend. She refuses to talk to him. Then he has an idea. He went into the kitchen and steamed a fish. Then he carefully deboned it for her.

He was not as skilful as BJY. It took him a long time just to get a small bowl of fish. He looked at it. That should be enough.

He took the precious little bowl and put it before his girlfriend: “Have some. You didn’t eat much for lunch today. I especially prepared it for you.”

His girlfriend was still mad at him, but she was also quite touched: “What are you doing?”

Fu Ziyu followed BJY’s example and said: “Can’t you tell? I am coaxing/pampering you.”

Her girlfriend laughs. She takes the bowl and says impressively: "That's so sweet. You know how to pamper a girl. What a master!"

Fu Ziyu answers modestly: "Oh, I just learnt the trick from my friend."

His girlfriend is surprised: "Who is this friend of yours? He is a genius."

Fu Ziyu thinks of his good friend, who is recently attached, and he answers: "He is a strange man. His love EQ is zero. He never gets the hints the girls are trying to give him. But I reckon he is a natural lover. Even before they started dating, his girlfriend will start blushing at his unintentional comments or actions.... ha ha..." He starts laughing.

"What's so funny?" asks his girlfriend.

"Oh, I'm just 'happy' for Jian Yao."

— — — — —

At the same time, BJY and Jyao are huddling together as they walking down a tree lined path together. Suddenly, he sneezes.

Jyao looks at him: "Are you cold?"

It's a cool autumn day. She is wearing his jacket. He only has a shirt on. He must be cold!

BJY sweeps her a look: "It's more important that you are not feeling cold."

- Oh... so sweet.... so sweet.

But she needs to point out an important fact: "But... I have my own jacket in the bag. I can take it out. Then you won't be cold either."

“No!” Insists BJY.

“....why?”

“I like to see you wrapped in my jacket.”

Jyao “.....”

She blushes.

When they get inside the apartment, BJY sits on the sofa. Jyao goes to the bathroom to wash her hands. When she returns, she sees him looking thoughtfully at her.

“What is it?”

“I want my jacket back.”

“Ok.” She takes off his jacket and passes it to him.

BJY smiles “Well, you must be cold now that you don’t have a jacket anymore. I have a great idea to keep you warm...”

He changes to a lower, deeper and inviting tone: “Come, sit on my lap.”

Jyao: “.....”

She is still blushing.

Chapter 46

The windy road lined with bars and nightclubs. Music blasting from these nightlife establishments fill the streets. The noise and the humid air from the lake add annoyance to an already irritated mind.

LI Xunran walks until he can't see Jyao and BJY anymore. He looks at the dark and lonely sky and gives a long sigh.

He did not take a taxi back to his hostel. Instead he chooses a bar that has a lively atmosphere. He walks up to the counter and orders another dozen beers, and sits by himself. It doesn't take long for a single lady to spot him and walk up to him. She offers him her phone number by stuffing a note into his shirt pocket. He laughs, retrieves the note and passes it back to the lady.

"Are you alone?" A man who is also sitting by himself asks him.

"Yes." They clink bottles and drink.

- I wish you happiness, Jyao. Cheers.

— — — — —

On a still lake.

Jyao is sitting on a wooden chair. She is looking out to the night lights. She is quite distracted as BJY is sitting beside her, with his arm around the back of her chair again.

The atmosphere was charged with excitement as their passion rose within them.

"You said earlier you are not looking for a boyfriend?" BJY asks.

Jyao does not expect him to bring this up. She doesn't understand what he is trying to say. She turns around to face the window, with her back to him, and answers: "I don't need you to introduce someone else to me."

She hears some wood scratching noise. BJY has moved his chair so he can be closer to her. Even though she has her back to him, she can feel him coming closer as the warmth of his body is transferred to her.

This man....

Why is he coming closer?

“Who says I am introducing someone else to you?” He whispers in his deep low voice.

She is slightly stunned, she turns around.

But because they are so close to each other, as she turns, their cheeks rub each other.

Jyao freezes.

He leans further in. There is hardly any gap between the faces. The tip of their noses are touching. His arms move and wrap around her to pull her toward his chest.

They feel the heat rising. Her cheeks and neck flaring hot.

This is just like what happened at the cinema... the same ambiguity. But this time, she can see his face, his thick black hair, his adam's apple, his hands, and those electrifying eyes.

What... does he want?

This atmosphere...burns. Jyao subconsciously leans back.

But there's a hand behind the back of her head, holding it in place, not allowing it to move away.

Jyao's heart is racing. She hears him say: "What are you afraid of?" He smiles: "Don't you want to kiss me?"

That moment, Jyao is so shocked that she can't think clearly. Her throat is also feeling a little dry.

"What about you.... you want to kiss me?"

After she speaks these words, her heart pounds like a drum inside her. She lowers her eyelids. She dares not to look at him. She feels the tip of his finger lifting her chin.

His breathing is even closer now, she can feel the warmth just above the tip of her nose.

"Yes." His voice is a little coarse. "Very much so."

She inhaled a deep breath. Her hands tightly gripes the armrests of the wooden chair.

His soft cold lips touch hers.

It's quiet on the lake. There's a faint sound of music coming from the shore, and the sound of a wood oar paddling through the water. BJY is leaning on top of Jyao. One hand cups the back of her head, while the other cradles her face, locking her in his arms. His lips gently covering hers, licking, sucking... She breathes in his unique masculine scent.

Jyao is shivering. Her heart seems to have stopped beating. Her chest is tightening. She stiffens. But the sensation from the lips... confusing but great at the same time. It's gentle, mystical, dazzling... She lightly gasps. She opens her eyes. She sees a calm and focused BJY, with his eyes closed. She closes her eyes too. She relaxes and allows him to access the warmth of her mouth.

He is kissing her.

How does the kiss feel like to him? She wonders.

A woman's scent, as sweet as he has imagined in his dreams. Actually, it's better than what he's imagined. When their lips touched, he feels like he is licking honey... He doesn't want to let go of her. When her nose tip touches his face, and her lashes brushes over his cheeks... Oh... it's so ticklish, but pleasant.

This kiss... is different from what he expected.

He thought he would kiss like a gentleman - gently, softly.. that would be a perfect kiss. But after awhile, he felt he wanted more...a more in-depth kiss. He instinctively uses his tongue to swipe across the opening of her lips. She opens her mouth. He can feel her shivering even more as he slides his tongue inside her mouth and tangles with hers.... her breathing becomes heavier. She releases her hand from gripping the armrest to rest gently on his chest. He is stirred by her responsiveness to his kiss. There's a pleasure he has never felt before in his life. He wraps his hands around the back of her waist and deepens his kiss. Even he is starting to gasp for air...

After a long time, he finally lets go of her, concluding their real first kiss.

A passionate french kiss.

Jyao's face is burning. Her dreamy eyes are gleaming like the stars.

BJY's hand is still cradling her around her shoulders. He looks at her. Even his face, which is usually pale, has a touch of red on his cheeks.

"That's was great. Don't you think?" He says in a low voice.

Jyao's face couldn't get any redder than this. But her heart is filled with joy. She asks softly: "Why did you kiss me?"

BJY: "What's wrong with kissing my girlfriend?"

Jyao's lips curl into a smile: "When did I agree to be your girlfriend?"

BJY looks at her. The hand that is resting on her shoulder starts to twirl and play with her hair.

"Then you can think about it now."

Neither of them speaks for a while. Then he says: "Jyao. I like you. No matter which angle you look from, we are a perfect match. In the past, we've obviously positioned our relationship incorrectly."

Then he continues in his low voice: "We are attracted to each other. We suit each other. I don't think you need to even think about it. Our kiss, it says it all. You, and me. We have feelings for each other. I want you, Jyao, as my woman, my lover."

Jyao is speechless. He said 'he likes her!

He also said 'they have incorrectly positioned their relationship' - what utter rubbish! Only HE had the wrong idea.

And, "he wants her"??

The cabin is quiet other than the sound of the water beneath them. Jyao leans into his arms. After a while, he turns to look at her: "So, what's your decision?"

Jyao tries not to laugh: "It's just been a few minutes."

He sweeps her a look: "Ok, take your time." Then he points at his face with his finger: "Kiss me. I initiated the kiss earlier. Now it's your turn."

Jyao laughs: "...what?" That's BJY's logic for you.

He stops urging. But he doesn't move. He is waiting. Jyao's heart is beating faster again. She leans over and kisses him softly on his cheeks.

He turns around and looks straight into her eyes.

"That was perfect!" He mutters.

Before she has time to respond, he tightens his arms to pull her even closer towards him. Not giving her a chance to object, he kisses her again.

— — — —

By the time they leave the boat, her lips are a little swollen.

So is his. A twenty two year woman and a twenty six years old man, acting like teenagers that experience love for the first time.

The streets are still filled with people having a good time at the bars and nightclubs. BJY has his arm around her waist. They are walking to the carpark together.

He is in a fantastic mood. Everything seems to be beautiful and lovely. Even when the carpark warden greeted BJY, he did something he's never done before. He responded.

— — — —

As they leave the nightlife district, there's less cars on the road. They drive through the city lights.

BJY has his hand on the steering wheel. He can't stop smiling. Jyao is sitting beside him. Her heart is filled with a happiness that she can't even start to describe.

Perhaps it's because they kissed too much? Both of them are feeling thirsty. Jyao takes out a bottle of mineral water on the side. She drinks a few mouthful and is about to put the lid back on. BJY reaches his hands out to take it from her.

Jyao tells him: "There's another bottle. Do you want me to get it for you?"

BJY smiles at her: "I am drinking yours." He starts drinking.

- Oh, this man....

He is so natural with actions like these... it's so sweet that it's almost reached the point of being sickening... But she loves it.

After driving for a while, he turns to look at her.

"Yao Yao, do you want me?" He asks.

Jyao just about chokes on the mouthful of water she is sipping.

Though his choice of word is suggestive, she is sure the word 'want' means 'belong to' in this context.

She coughs and then answers softly: "You are already my boyfriend."

- After that passionate kiss, you are still asking if I want you?

BJY pauses for a while and says: "I mean... my body."

Jyao coughs more. This time, her face is red too.

"No... not now." she answers immediately.

- Come on, the thought has never crossed her mind.

But then she thought about her answer. Not now? Why didn't she simply say no?

They stop at the traffic lights. He looks on to the road ahead. Then he says: "It will be very beautiful."

It took a while for Jyao to understand what he was referring to.

Her face burns again.

This guy...

She used to think to herself. If one day, he decides to like her too, she will probably have to initiate a lot of things in the relationship, since his love EQ is so low. He has no experiences with relating to girls. But she is willing to guide him. Step by step, they will create a future today. Because, even though she has not been in a relationship before either, she is the one with the higher EQ.

But perhaps she is wrong.

After the 'awakening', even though his EQ is still lacking... he is a man with no shame! And his narcissistic personality means he will just ask for what he wants, when he wants it. So, he is already thinking about...

All this while, she has been quietly waiting for him to respond. Carefully, they will build their relationship slowly. One step at a time.

But the response she is getting seems very different from her expectations. She is like a little rabbit who is hopping into a wolf's den, ready to be devoured!

No. It can't be this way!

— — — — —

They are back at the apartment block. They stand in front of BJY's front door.

Jyao: "I'm going back. Goodnight."

BJY smiles. His arm is still around her waist: "I will send you up."

Jyao is still thinking about his 'want' statement. She stiffens a bit. But he's already pressed the button for the elevator.

That should be fine. Jyao thinks to herself. I won't allow anything to happen tonight. Not possible!

They are standing outside Jyao's door. And Chen Mo is there, cuddled up in the corner.

Jyao asks curiously: "Chen Mo? Why are you here?"

BJY looks at the empty shell. The flower is gone. Anyone could have taken it. Kids, the cleaner, security... Oh well, never mind, he's got the woman.

Jyao is about to pick him up. BJY stops her: "Just leave him here. I will bring him down afterwards."

Jyao: "Well, at least, take him with us."

BJY gives her a glance: "Do you liked to be watched by a turtle while you are kissing your boyfriend?"

Jyao: "....."

So, he intends to kiss her again when they get inside?

She unlocks the door with her key, and says to him at the same time: "It's getting late. You should get going. We have to go to the station tomorrow."

There's a click sound. BJY pushes the door open and walks in.

Jyao follows behind. She closes the door.

Jyao left a side lamp on. It is not a very bright light, helps to create a lovely ambiance.

He takes off his jacket, then turns around to look at her.

She feels a bit uneasy and walks to the kitchenette: "Would you like some water?" she asks.

He has walked up to her. She turns around. He puts his hands on her shoulders. He looks at her with a smile.

Before she has time to think, he has pushed her all the way to her bed.

"What are you doing?" She puts her hand in front of his chest to block him from coming any closer. But before she knows it, she is pushed onto the bed, with him lying on top of her.

His lips are always covering hers, he replies fuzzily: "Kiss you, of course. Now, close your eyes."

This kiss is even more passionate than the ones on the boat. Jyao feels his weight on top of hers. She is feeling breathless. One of his hands gliding over her hair, the other holding one of her hands. He deepens the kiss...

Both of their breathing quickens. BJY's lips have left her face, it's moving down the curves of her neckline... downwards. He is just following his primitive instincts.

Jyao never felt this way before.... the tinkling sensation. She feels like she is melting under his lips...

Suddenly, she feels coolness in her chest. She looks down. He's left her neck. His hand is unbuttoning her shirt, and his mouth is resting on her soft plump skin...

Jyao pushes him away: "Stop! Not there."

BJY lifts up his head. His face is red. He looks at her. Then she sees him licking his lips, as if he wants more. But he decides to let go of her.

They sit side by side on the bed. Though the long kiss is over, the atmosphere is still hot and steamy. Jyao carefully buttons up her top, pulls her clothes and uses her fingers to brush her messy hair. Then BGY takes her hand and places it inside his.

He slips his hand around her waist and holds her. He looks at her. His voice is still coarse: "To reciprocate the favour... don't you want to kiss my neck?"

Jyao's heart starts pounding again.

Why is it so hard to resist him?

She puts her hands on his shoulder. Then she leans over and gently presses her lips on his neck. His scent wafting around her and into her nostrils. His hands gently caressing her cheeks, her hair, her ears....

After a while, she looks up. They stare into each other eyes.

"You are so sexy..." He says softly.

Jyao's face is burning with embarrassment.

He leans over to kiss her again. She pushes him away with whatever strength is left inside her: "You should go."

— — — — —

Reluctantly, BJY returns to his apartment. The first day of invasion stops at the neck.

Jyao lies in bed. His masculine smell lingers in her studio. She covers her face with the duvet.

What is she going to do? She is crazy about him, but he is moving so fast. How many times will she be able to stop his advancements?

— — — — —

BJY puts Chen Mo to the corner. He takes a shower, then goes to bed.

At night, he dreamt again. In his dream, Jyao didn't stop him when he was kissing her breast. Then... the passion continued...

Suddenly, BJY wakes up. He sits on the bed for a few seconds. He changes the bed linen and his pyjamas. He throws them into the washing machine. Then he goes back to bed.

.....

Oh! Tonight is so satisfying, and yet dissatisfying.

Chapter 47

Monday morning. Fu Ziyu is holding his cup of coffee, sitting in his office. The first thing he does is to give Bo Jinyan a call.

“How was it?” He laughs: “Was it successful?”

Bo Jinyan answers lazily on the other end: “She is very happy with me.” He is standing in front of the mirror, putting on his tie.

Fu Ziyu laughs. Even though this is what he has expected, he can’t stand BJY’s arrogance.

“Let’s celebrate tonight.” Says Fu Ziyu.

“Ok.”

After he hangs up. Fu Ziyu calls Jian Yao to congratulate her.

It was too late last night. Jian Yao didn’t notice the love bites he left on her neck. She is examining at them in the mirror when he called.

“Thanks. If it’s not for your encouragement, we might not be together.”

They chat for a while. She asks: “What made Bo Jinyan decide to confess yesterday?” She smiles as she asks the question.

FJY recalls the answer Bo Jinyan gave him when he asked the exact same question.

“It’s because he suddenly realised you are special to him. And he has strong desires for you.’

Jian Yao blushes in the morning sun.

“.... I can tell.” She mutters.

“What?” Fu Ziyu didn’t hear her.

Jian Yao refuses to repeat: “O, nothing.”

— — — — —

Jian Yao comes down to his apartment as usual. After two knocks. Bo Jinyan quickly opens the door. He has a big smile on his face.

“Good morning.” Jian Yao says.

Bo Jinyan looks down at her: “Good morning, my dear.”

She is stunned by the term of endearment. He continues with his plan, which is to bend down and give her a morning kiss...French style.

After the short kiss, he moves his lips away. His bright black eyes look gently at her. He says with his low husky voice: “We’ll continue tonight?”

Jian Yao blushes.

This man....

She changes the subject: “Let’s go. We have lots on today.”

“Mmm..” He rests his hands inside the pockets of his trousers.

“You can cling to my arms when we are walking together.”

She obliges and put her arm around his.

He looks satisfied. She can’t help laughing...

- He likes to cling on to me when he walks.

Actually, she likes it too.

— — — — —

The first day of work after they become lovers.

Nothing much changes. As Bo Jinyan starts to work, he returns to the Bo Jinyan she is familiar with - quiet, focused, a little unruly. He still forgets to eat, or to talk to her. So naturally, there's no kissing either.

But for her, it's different. What happened last night keeps distracting her from concentrating.

But she is glad that he is acting 'normally'. That when they are working, he would keep a professional distance.

However, when the bell rings for lunchtime, something is different from usual.

She sees a pair of eyes, looking hungrily at her.

- Oh... the bell broke his concentration for work. Suddenly, his mind is freed up to think of other things.

Then Bo Jinyan puts down what he is doing. He walks over to Jian Yao and kissed her. After a very long kiss, he smiles and goes back to work.

Mmmm.... so it's not because he doesn't want to kiss her. He is just too focused on his work and forgets the world around him. But once he's stopped working, he comes immediately to soothe his desires.

— — — — —

Twilight. Fu Ziyu arrives at the restaurant.

He asks the waitress: "Have my friends arrived yet?"

The waitress shows him to the private dining room. She blushes as she tells him: "They have arrived for a while now."

Fu Ziyu was puzzling about her strange reaction. But once he opened the door to the room, it all made sense. Inside the dimly lit room. A

couple is sitting at the sofa. The man has his head lowered down. He is kissing the girl in the pretty long dress.

Even though he has had many girlfriends himself, seeing how focused these two are in their kiss, he feels a little embarrassed on their behalf.

And it is too hard to imagine.... Bo Jinyan kissing a girl!

He gives a small laugh, then walks over to them.

When Bo Jinyan and Jian Yao hear someone has entered the room, they lift their heads together. Jian Yao's face is red with embarrassment. She wants to push Bo Jinyan away. Bo Jinyan just takes a glance at Fu Ziyu, nods at him and turns his attention back to Jian Yao: "Ziyu can do the ordering. Let's continue."

Jian Yao pushes harder to break away from him. She picks up her glass of juice.

This man....a professor by day, an animal by night. When he wants to kiss, he doesn't care who is there with them.

Bo Jinyan starts chatting with Fu Ziyu. But he is still holding her hand. He is squeezing her hands playfully.

In the middle of the meal, Bo Jinyan decides to go to the toilet. Fu Ziyu looks at Jian Yao. She thought he is about to hassle her. But he gives a sigh, and says to her: "This is great. I thought he would die a lonely old man. Thanks for loving him."

Jian Yao is touched. She says: "Surely not. You mentioned before that lots of girls are interested in him."

Fu Ziyu answers: "But love is a two way thing. It's not easy to win his heart." He rests his chin on his hand: "Beware, Jian Yao. Once he's serious about you, he's committed for life."

Jian Yao answers: "That's too far in the future." They just started. And not to forget, his love EQ is low.

"...I'll prove it to you." he says with a very sure tone.

After Bo Jinyan comes back. Fu Ziyu says in a very causal tone: "You will only accept a perfect ring as a wedding ring for Jian Yao."

Jian Yao is drinking tea. She is observing his reactions. Bo Jinyan answers without thinking: "Of course."

Fu Ziyu continues: "Choosing the stone, getting it polished, deciding on a designer, find the right craftman... You will need at least a few months. Remember that."

Bo Jinyan thinks for a while. He looks at Jian Yao "She is the most fussy woman I've ever met. I should allow twelve months." Then he lifts his brows: "Oh... should make a start on it now."

Fu Ziyu: "Sure."

Jian Yao: "..."

— — — — —

Falling in love has the same effect to a person whether they are sixteen or twenty six. No matter how old you are, you just want to spend as much time as you can with the other person. Even if the two of you are just sitting together, doing nothing.

It's 8:00pm. The golden hours in the evening. Jian Yao didn't even ask. She knew he would follow her to her studio. As she steps into the elevator, he holds her hand.

"If I remember correctly.." he says "You should move in with me today."

Jian Yao is confused: "When did I say that?"

Bo Jinyan pauses and 'reminds' her: "Well, you said when you have a boyfriend, you will be living with him, spending time with him 24/7" That is what she said before.

It was meant to be an excuse to reject his offer for moving in with him previously.

Now he is using it to his advantage.

She bits her lower lip. He continues to say to her: "Attention. I am your boyfriend. We have a great relationship. I fit all your requirements..."

"Ok." She says softly, holding his hand and swaying it: "I will move my stuff down tonight."

He tightens his grip on her hand.

"Fantastic."

One hour later.

Bo Jinyan is holding her luggage, walking in front. She follows leisurely behind.

She remembers what he said in the restaurant. He has already made up his mind to marry her. She is so touched.

But of course, it also shows how arrogant he is. But she didn't want to fight with him. Because if she says "But when did I decide to marry you?" , he might well decide to propose to her tonight. What if that happens? So it's much easier not to bring up the subject.

But....

She knows that he is not a man who will plan for these things way in advance. It's just that Fu Ziyu mentioned about it, and he speaks out his views on it.

At least she knows that he is serious about the relationship. That he cares a lot about her.

And whether they will get more intimate? She thought it has nothing to do with moving in together. Bo Jinyan is a gentleman. He will respect her decisions. So whether it will happen or not, it's entirely up to her.

But Jian Yao doesn't know men well enough. And she doesn't know herself well enough either. She forgets that sometimes emotions and passion can bury logic and self control.

There's still lots of time after they move her belongings downstairs. He sits down on the sofa and turns on the TV. Time for another documentary.

Now that this is also her home, she takes away the remote and says: "Let's watch something else for a change." She changes to the drama channel.

Bo Jinyan frowns and says: "That's torture."

Jian Yao replies: "It's entertainment." She continues to change channels to see what interests her. Bo Jinyan is trying to stop her. But when he lowers his head, she lifts her head at the same time. Pulling his sleeves, she says to him: "You work on those cases all day. Your brain will need to rest too. Don't just watch documentaries on criminology." She speaks softly to him. Her slender fingers touch the fabric when she pulls his sleeve.

So he says to her: "I am not interested. But if you kiss me every five minutes, I will accompany you to do even the most boring thing in the world."

— — — — —

After they finish, it's past 11:00pm.

Jian Yao is sitting in his lap. He is kissing her.... cheeks, neck, ears, hand... Every time he finishes, he will demand her to kiss him on the same spots.

Amidst the rosy cheeks, heavy breathing, and loving gazes, he tries to seduce her again: "Sleep in my room tonight?" he says in his coarse husky voice.

Jian Yao quickly jumps off him: "No, I am going to bed now."

— — — — —

She is lying on bed. Jian Yao has the duvet over her head. she can still hear what's happening outside. His footsteps. Noise of opening and closing doors. Then it's the sound of water coming out from a tap.

He is taking a bath in the lounge.

He really doesn't care, does he?

She doesn't want to hear the sound but there's no way of shutting them out. Then her phone rings.

It's Jian Xuan.

She is spending her summer holidays at home. She will return to school after Mid-autumn festival.

Jian Yao smiles and answers the call. After chatting for awhile, Jian Yao senses there's something on her sister's mind.

"What it is?" She says her sister.

Jian Xuan pauses. Then she asks Jian Yao: "Did Li Xunran confess his love to you?"

"What?" says Jian Yao.

Chapter 48

There is an endless crowd in the vast airport departure hall, and broadcast updates for the passengers every few minutes. This place is like the rest of B City: prosperous, busy and surrounded by strangers.

Li Xunran lights a cigarette in the smoking room. He takes out his mobile phone.

It's a photo of Jian Yao which he took a few days ago. She was smiling brightly in the sun. And he was standing behind her, with one hand on the railings and the other over her shoulder.

He gives a small laugh. He puts out his cigarette and stands up.

As he opens the door of the smoking room, he sees her. Jian Yao. Their eyes meet. She smiles at him, like she normally would, warm and gentle.

Li Xunran feels like someone has poked his heart with small knife as he sees the smile.

After a moment, he walks up to her. He smiles: 'Why are you here?'

This time, Jian Yao voice has a little sadness in it: "You don't plan to say goodbye before you leave?"

Li Xunran is quiet. Behind them, people are hurrying past to get the departure gates.

Both of them smiles at the same time. Li Xunran reaches out to pull Jian Yao into his arms. Jian Yao rests her hands on his back. He has a comfortable and broad chest, with a faint smell of sweat.

Even though Li Xunran is three years older than Jian Yao. Jian Yao has never called him "Ge".

(NOTE from TB: just in case you are not familiar... Ge which means brother - a term the chinese uses for people in the same generation as them but older. It's a term used amongst friends and acquaintances as well as family)

Li Xunan is Li Xunran. When she needs him, he is always there. He is always encouraging her - "You can do this. It is not that difficult." "Yes, that's more like it. Well done."

Nothing more needs to be said. Her most important friend. Someone she never wants to lose.

Li Xunran cradles her in his arms. His hands feel her soft waist, her floral fragrance in his nose. He tightens his grip, then lets her go.

"How did you come into the departure lounge? It's restricted area." He asks.

She holds up her police identity card: "That's quite handy. Now I know how you feel to have a pass that gives you access everywhere."

Li Xunran laughs. He puts his hand on her shoulders: "Go. I need to board the plane."

"Mmm..." Jian Yao laughs too. She walks with him. They are at the start of the corridor that leads to the departure gate.

"Your new boyfriend is not with you today?" He asks.

"No, he is at home."

— — — — —

There are many kinds of love. Li Xunran's love to Jian Yao is in between friends and lovers.

From young, they hang out together. As Jian Yao was growing up, a lot of boys were interested in her. They wanted to go after her, but they were blocked by Li Xunran. Others used to say to him: "Hey, you are only protecting her so that you can have her all to yourself." He used to say to them: "That's my sister. I am not going to let her get into a relationship in her teens. It's too young."

But is she only a sister to him? At least for eighteen year old Li Xunran, that's what he thought. Then a year later, he finished his last year of secondary school. He got into the Police academy. He needed to leave town. On his last day at home, he went to her house.

At the entrance of their house, he heard Jian Xuan crying: "Sis, are you really ok with Li Xunran leaving?"

At the time, Jian Yao was fifteen. Jian Xuan was twelve. Li Xunran overheard their conversation.

"Of course not.... I will miss him so much." Jian Yao says: "Actually, I want to go to the Police Academy too."

Li Xunran felt like something was pricking his heart.

Jian Yao was a strong girl. He seldom saw her in tears. She must really like her 'Xunran Ge'.

That night, Li Xunran made up his mind. He wanted to tell her that he will wait for her. He will wait for her to grow up. When she is eighteen, he will be her first boyfriend. When he steps into their house for the second time though, he overheard another conversation. This time, it's between his mom, and her mom.

"You won't let Jian Yao go to the police academy?" Li Xunran's mom asked. "Actually it's pretty safe to be policemen nowadays. Times are different."

Jian Yao's mom shook her head: "I don't. And I will be frank to you. I don't want my daughter to find a boyfriend who is a policeman either. I don't want her to keep remembering what happened. She is still young. I don't want her to carry the burden for the rest of her life."

Li Xunran's mom pats her back: "I understand. Don't worry. Xunran is like a brother to her. Both of them are good kids. We are very lucky."

— — — — —

Li Xunran had one girl friend when he was attending university. But she didn't want to live in a small town. When Li Xunran returned to his hometown to work, they broke up.

Last winter, he met Jian Yao again. He was very happy to see her. Then Jian Yao became Bo Jinyan's assistant. He felt a hint of jealousy.

But he didn't persist. He was sure he would get over it.

They were good friends. They lived in different cities. Her mom didn't approve of a policeman boyfriend. And most importantly, she was not interested in him.

Until two months ago. He was badly injured while investigating a case. Stabbed by one of the criminal several times.

People say you see visions before you die. At the verge of death, he remembered seeing a flash of white light. Then blood speared all over a dull and confused world.

He saw his parents. He was in his police uniform. They were smiling, hugging as a family.

Then he saw a room, full of blood.

A room that is decorated in 1990s, with a twenty inch LED TV. The sofa was the old fashioned type that had springs in them. There were a few people lying on the ground. A lot of people were in the room. Many of them, crying. As he entered the room, he stepped into a pool of blood.

Then he heard someone say:

"All dead, except for two kids."

"The younger one is carried outside. But the older one refuses to leave. She is clinging on to Lao Jian (Jian Senior)."

"She saw everything."

"Xunran? How did you get in here? Bring both of the kids out."

Then someone put a little girl next to him. She had blood all over her.

He looked down. His little face was pale. Her eyes were wide open. She was not crying. She was not making a sound. She used her little arms to hug him. He hugged her back.

They hugged each other for the next few days. They refused to let go. They slept together at night.

That year. He was ten. She was seven.

He thought, that he only had a crush on her. That it would eventually pass. But until he reached the point where he almost died, did he realise he had given everything within him to her. His love for her flowed like a quiet stream, one that had never stopped flowing for as long as he knew her.

— — — — —

Jian Xuan was home. She often visited him in the hospital. One day she picked up his mobile phone: "It's a missed call from sis. She sent you a text. Are you not going to reply to her?"

He smiled: "No, if she knows about this, she will drop everything she is doing and come back immediately. She just started her new job."

Jian Xuan looked at him. She keeps quiet.

But Li Xunran was well aware of the real reason. He didn't want her to see him in pain. It would be too heartbreaking for her. He is a man. A police. If he has to sacrifice his life for justice, so be it. But he did not want to see the woman he loves to shed a tear for him.

He was seven years late in his confession. When he was well, he would go and find her.

— — — —

At the departure gate. Most of the travellers have boarded the plane.

Li Xunran turns to look at Jian Yao. He didn't say much, just ruffles her hair with a smile.

Jian Yao laughs too: "I will come back to visit you during Chinese New Year."

"Mmmm..."

Moments of quiet.

Then he calls her softly: "Jian Yao."

"Huh..." Jian Yao answers

"Look who is here." He points to her back.

Jian Yao thought "No way..." She turns around, but there are only faces of strangers. There is no sight of the arrogant man.

She turns back to face Li Xunran. Suddenly a shadow covers her face. The next thing she knows, his lips are pressing on hers.

His hand wraps around her waist. His tongue going straight into her mouth. She tries to move her tongue away from his, but he is determined to chase after her. His kiss is hard and deep, like he wants to swallow her mouth and tongue.

Jian Yao tries to push him away. But before long, he lets go of her. They keep a safe distance between them. His face seems to be blushing too. His lips still wet from the kiss.

Jian Yao looks at him. She doesn't know what to say.

He laughs and touches his lip with his hand.

“Just this once.” He says slowly. “To make my trip worthwhile.”

Jian Yao feels heaviness in her heart.

He has a big smile on his face. “Ok, I am going. Remember, you said you’d visit this winter.” He turns around walks to the gate.

“Xunran!” Jian Yao shouts out.

He pauses his steps.

“Have a good trip. Send me a text when you get home.”

He doesn’t look back. He waves to her and says his farewell in a warm voice: “Goodbye, Jian Yao.”

Goodbye, the girl that I didn’t know I’ve loved for so many years.

— — — — —

Jian Yao drove Bo Jinyan’s Grand Cherokee to the airport today. When she left the carpark, it’s past 8:00pm.

The corners of her eyes starts to get wet. She lets down the windows of the car. The autumn’s breeze comes through. After a while, the tears are dried off.

— — — — —

When she gets back into the apartment. The TV is on, but there is no one in the lounge.

She takes off her shoes to change into house slippers. A sweet buttery smell is coming from the kitchen.

She walks into the kitchen and finds Bo Jinyan with a black apron over his shirt and trousers. He is wearing a pair of mittens, standing proudly in front of the kitchen table.

A combination of cool & chic, and warmth & family. Two images that don't usually fit together. It's a strangely comforting sight. He takes a look at her and turns to the oven.

Jian Yao walks to him: "What are you doing?
He is wearing mittens, so he can't hug her. He leans over to give her a peck on the lips.

"As you are out saying goodbye to your secret admirer, your boyfriend is at home making cookies for you."

She is stunned.

After work today, she told him she is going to the airport to send Li Xunran off. Bo Jinyan just say to her: "Ok, let's go." Then she corrected him: "I am going, by myself."

She thought he would be upset with her. But he simply said: "Be careful. Don't come home too late."

Jian Yao didn't tell him about Li Xunran's feelings for her. She thought Bo Jinyan don't really care about Li Xunran.

- So he knows about it. Well, of course he would.

He is a psychologist. Just because he is slow with his own emotions doesn't mean he doesn't have feelings. In fact, since he met Jian Yao on day one, he quite liked her. But he thought that the 'like' feeling was similar to what he had for FZY - friendship.... until he realised how much he wanted to have her all to himself.

— — — —

Once he realised it is love (between a man and a woman), he was able to see that Li Xunran had the same micro-expressions on his face as himself when he was with Jian Yao.

When he heard that Jian Yao wanted to send Li Xunran off by herself, he was not entirely happy. But he is a gentleman and he knew he had to respect Jian Yao and give her the space she needed.

So.. he baked cookies for her instead.

Because, she made a passing comment before about a particular cookie recipe that she likes very much.

— — — — —

Their eyes meet. His gentle gaze melts away any remaining heaviness in her heart.

She wraps her hands around his waist: "Thank you. My hardworking boyfriend."

Since they are together, this is the first time she has initiated a hug (although it's only been three days, Bo Jinyan feels they have been together for a long time). His lips curls into a smile: "You don't have much strength."

Squeeze harder, woman!

— — — — —

But Bo Jinyan does not like to be interrupted when he is in action. This applies to baking too. After a while, he makes Jian Yao waits for him outside.

When the cookies are ready, he tried the first one. He is happy with it.

A plate of his cookies, some red wine, and a red rose. He carries the tray into the lounge but no one is there. She is standing in the balcony. She turns around to look at him. She has light a candle and placed it on the balcony table. She looks beautiful under the candlelight.

- Oh.... she is so romantic.

Bo Jinyan puts down the biscuits and give her a kiss.

"Can we chat?" She asks

"Mmmm...."

"I want to tell you about my childhood."

The Bo Jinyan that is focusing on the kiss pauses. Then he locks his hand tightly around her waist: "A good decision." he says to her.

Chapter 49

When you love a person, you want to share your deepest secrets with him.

On a peaceful night. Even the stars are ready for bed, shimmering in the horizon. Jian Yao curls up like a cat on the sofa. She is resting her head on Bo Jinyan's chest. She says: "Actually, I can't remember much about what happened to dad, or even what he looks like."

Bo Jinyan nods: "That's the usual memory capacity for a normal person."

Jian Yao laughs. She beats his chest lightly. Even as a listener, he is serious and 'technical'.

"I was seven then." she said. Her eyes are looking into a blank space. "Dad was involved in a murder case with a gang leader. The man had many followers."

"Ah.." Bo Jinyan 's hand plays with the hair behind her ears: "Continue."

"That day, dad brought me and Xiao Xuan to my grandfather's house. It's grandpa's birthday. Mom had to work late in the factory." Her voice is turning coarse. "We were having so much fun. I remembered grandma and grandpa were cooking dinner. Jian Xuan was very young then. She was sleeping in the room. Dad was playing with me. Then, those men came."

Jian Yao's tightens her grip on Bo Jinyan 's hand. Bo Jinyan looks at her with his deep black eyes.

"They call themselves the 'axe gang', because their choice of weapon is axes." Jian Yao lets out a breath, "Actually, they are all boys between twelve to twenty years old. They ran away quickly after the incident. All of them were caught and served time in prison after that."

After she finishes, she keeps quiet and leans more into his arms.

And Bo Jinyan

He sees her head digging into his chest. His heart has a burst of warmth and pity for her: Oh... she confides and trusts in him. Her man.

Listening and sharing are important aspects of any relationship, just like physical closeness.

After drafting a response in his mind, he says to Jian Yao: 'I am glad you share your past with me. Actually, I already know about this a long time ago. But it has a different significance to hear it from you. This

means that the love and trust you have for me has reached a deeper level. Of course, I am the same."

Jian Yao smiles in his arms.

He continues: "You have handled the tragic incident very well. I am very proud of you."

Tears form in the corners of her eyes. She knows his response will be different from the usual "don't be sad." Type's statements. But he is proud of her?

A simple statement, like the most beautiful music notes, has made an impact in her heart.

She pauses for a while, then she says: "There's more."

Bo Jinyan raises his brows. He looks at her.

"I was not in the room. I was in the lounge." She says slowly. "I was playing hide and seek with dad. He... locked me in the cupboard, and pushed a sofa over to cover it. I could see what's going on. They had the music up. No one heard my screaming and yelling. When I was rescued, dad was still alive. I held on to him, until he breathed his last breath."

— — — — —

Why did she decide to tell Bo Jinyan about it tonight?

Perhaps after saying goodbye to Li Xunran reminded her of her past.

Perhaps she has finally found a person whom she can share, without reservations, her deepest and most painful memories.

Because he understands. He understands how she would have felt, more than anyone else.

From now on, he is the closest person to her.

Bo Jinyan looks solemn. He stares at her for a few seconds, then he kisses her.

This evening, he embraced her while he listened quietly, and of course making sure his side of the promise was met - a kiss every now and then. When they first started, Jian Yao didn't pay too much attention. Later, she realised that he strictly followed the time limit - once five minutes was reached, he would pause the conversation and ask for a kiss.

She asks him if there are any interesting things he did at university that he wants to share with her. He frowns and replies: "Nothing in particular."

Jian Yao: "..... ok."

She is feeling tired. It's getting late.

She stands up from the sofa: "I am going to bed now."

Bo Jinyan looks at her. He also stands up. The two of them goes back through the lounge to get to their respective rooms.

Jian Yao says before she walks into her room: "Good night."

Bo Jinyan gently kisses her forehead: "Good night. Sweet dreams."

— — — — —

But she didn't really have sweet dreams. Instead, she finds it hard to fall asleep. Perhaps her heart is feeling a little empty after recalling the events from her childhood. She looks out the windows. Stars dimly lines the dark sky. She sighs.

Then she thinks about Bo Jinyan . These few nights, after a lot of cuddling and kissing, he will ask for more.

The first day. He asks: "Do you want my body?"

The second day. He says: "Sleep in my room tonight?"

But tonight. He seemed to have forgotten about this. He simply said goodnight to her.

Jian Yao laughs.

— — — — —

In Bo Jinyan 's room.

He is wearing his black pyjamas, lying straight (in the healthy sleep posture) on the bed. But he is not asleep yet.

He has seen things far worse than Jian Yao's experience. A lot more cruel and bloody, including his own past.

But when he thinks about his woman had once been through hell, and remembers her tears, he feels agitated.

After lying in bed for an hour or so, he gets out of bed, and takes out a key. He walks out of his room.

Men like him don't even consider whether it's appropriate to go into a woman's bedroom in the middle of the night, without her permission.

He only knows he really wants to be with this woman now. And she is just a wall away. So, why not?

— — — —

Jian Yao is still awake. She hears his footsteps.

Bo Jinyan is awake too? What is he trying to do in the middle of the night?

Then she hears the sound of the door being unlocked. He quietly walks into her room, and closes the door behind him.

Jian Yao is not nervous. She knows Bo Jinyan will not do anything to her that is against her will. The room is dark. She half open her eyes to see what he wants to do next.

He walks up to the bed. Jian Yao quickly closes her eyes to pretend she is asleep.

Then she feels her hand is lifted up by him. A warm moist touch - he kisses her hand.

Jian Yao's heart skips a beat. He gently puts her hand back on bed.

Sometimes, a small kiss on the back of the hand means more to woman than a long passionate kiss.

That is because it's not about lust - just admiration.

Jian Yao wants to laugh, but she refrains. After a while, she senses there's no more movement. She thought he is going to leave the room. But the right hand side of her bed sinks in.

She is stunned. He lied down on her bed?

His masculine scent is coming towards her. The coolness of the fabric of his black pyjamas brushes past her nose. Then, there's weight on top of her waist. He is resting his hand there.

She tries hard not to move. He is obviously not that tired. Soon, his hand is twirling her hair. But he is only doing it gently and carefully, just in case he wakes her up.

This guy....

Jian Yao can't stand it anymore. She opens her eyes. Her pupils are bright even in the dark room.

Their eyes meet. He is a little stunned. Then he smiles.

"You can't sleep either." he sounds pleased.

Jian Yao laughs. He is facing her, which means he is lying down sideways. She says to him: "Oh, an unhealthy sleep posture."

Bo Jinyan examines his pose. That's true. He didn't even notice that. As someone that despises her sleeping position... he has broken the golden rule.

He looks at her for a while: "So?"

She answers: "So.. what?"

"How are you going to compensate me?"

Once the voice stops, his kiss lands on her mouth.

A deep kiss. His hands cupping her cheeks. He kisses her until she starts to gasp for air.

Then he looks at her.

Jian Yao looks at him too. He is like a beautiful sculpture, whose existence is for the sole purpose of staring at her.

Heat is rising quickly in this room. At least, that's how the two of them feel. It's like something is fermenting in the air. Her heart is pounding like never before. The emptiness she felt earlier is completely filled and soothed by this kiss. His mouth, his every touch, like a magnet, is attracting her to want more.

She wraps her arms around his neck. And at the same time, he moves on top of her. Their hands lock together. His lips press on her again.

After the sharing, both of their hearts are unsettled, they both feel the suppressed desires slowly releasing.

He starts at the mouth, then he hovers on her cheeks. Soon he moves down to her neck. Jian Yao mind is not thinking whether this is or is not appropriate anymore. She just wants to be close to him. Tonight feels different to the past two nights. An urge that was hiding somewhere deep within their body have surfaced. A fire has been ignited.

Dangerous, but terribly tempting. Perhaps she is not sure what she is getting herself into.

Jian Yao is wearing a pyjamas set. Bo Jinyan's hand is feeling the curves of her body that's underneath the thin layer of fabric. Then, he reaches up gradually and grabs a handful of her full and plump flesh.

"Oh..." He uses his fingers to squeeze it gently. His mouth lets out a moan.

It's the first time someone has touched her like this. Jian Yao grabs on to his pyjamas. She buries her face in his chest.

Without thinking, Bo Jinyan is unbuttoning her pyjamas top.

She cries out: "Don't..."

For the first time, Bo Jinyan ignores her plead. He lowers his head and bites her.

That is a strange sensation. An itch that starts dispersing to the rest of her body from the top of her head. In the dark, she can see his short black hair. His head buried in her chest. She feels like she is suffocating.

“fantastic!” He mutters.

(TB: In the original text, that's exactly what he said - Fantastic- in English)

Jian Yao covers her face with her hands: “Can you please... don't comment.”

They bodies are rubbing against each other. He holds her with his pair of large hands. Amidst the gentle bites and kisses, she feels something hard is against her body.

This is making her feel very shy, and a little fearful of what will happen next.

Suddenly, Bo Jinyan lets go of her and sits up.

She looks at him.

He quickly takes off his clothes and lies down on top of her again.

Jian Yao puts a hand on his chest to stop him: “You took off your clothes... for what?”

Bo Jinyan is also stunned.

He took off his clothes because subconsciously, he was feeling very hot. There's a tight feeling inside him that makes him want to explode. So... he took off his clothes.

He pauses for a second and thinks about the situation.

“Jian Yao, let’s do it.”

She is lying underneath him. Goosebumps rises on her bare skin that’s exposed in the air. She makes a fist. She looks at him in the dark. His naked body.

In this moment, time has stopped for the both of them. The atmosphere is hot and inviting. They look quietly at each other. He is waiting for her answer.

In a soft and slightly coarse voice, she whispers: “Please be gentle.”

Bo Jinyan has a big grin on his face: “Thank you.”

His body covers her. Only this time, while their tongues tangle, his hand slides underneath her pants.

Her whole body tenses up as he touches her leg.

Then, she hears his voice in her ears: “I need to make one correction.”

“Huh...” Even her voice is shivering.

“If I am too gentle, you will not be aroused.”

She feels defeated. She just wants to hide in his arms: “Please... just don’t speak.”

He straightens his body again. He reaches out for the light switch: “I need to turn on the lights.”

“No!” Jian Yao is blocking his hand.

“Why? Don’t you want to look at my body?”

"That's not it." She said. Her face is red like a tomato. "I am shy. We'll have the lights on next time. Ok?"

Bo Jinyan hesitates: "Ok."

Jian Yao is relieved, until she hears him say: "I can wear my night vision glasses. Then we'll both get what we want."

"No! You are not allowed to." She holds on to his shoulders to stop him from getting out of bed.

Bo Jinyan looks at her in the dark. Then he laughs.

"Why are you so shy?"

Before he gets an answer, he leans down again. Tenderly and gently, he glides his hands down her neck and below. He takes her pyjamas top off and starts kissing her back, inch by inch, while his hand continues to move down her body.

Every cell in Bo Jinyan is crying out to him to get to the main act. But he restrains himself. He knows the woman in his lap is accepting his advances because she loves him very much. But she is very shy and tense. As a gentleman, he should put her feelings before his. And human biology tells us sufficient foreplay is necessary to help a lady get excited. He wants her to have a good and memorial first experience. So he patiently waits and enduring the burning desires in him, kissing her over and over again.

In hindsight, Bo Jinyan regretted the delay. Based on experiences he accumulated after that night, he realised that Jian Yao's body would have been ready for him midway through their foreplay. But since he lack experience at the time, he dragged it out for too long, which led to the delay of their first night.

— — — — —

It's late in the night.

Jian Yao's perfect naked body is finally before him. Bo Jinyan takes a breathe. He is ready to reach out to her.

Suddenly the phone rings.

Both of them pauses.

Jian Yao was in a dreamy state while Bo Jinyan was all over her. She is 'awaken' by the call. She reaches out to the bedside cabinet.

"Leave it." Bo Jinyan is trying to grab her hands.

Jian Yao: "... This is a special ringtone I set for incoming calls from the Police Station."

Bo Jinyan gives a big sigh.

He reaches out and takes the phone: "I am Bo Jinyan."

The team leader is a little taken back. He calls Jian Yao's number but Bo Jinyan answers the phone... in the middle of the night?

But he had more important issue at hand than to speculate what is happening over their end: "A family is murdered in the Daxin district. The crime scene is gruesome, and very strange. It's hard to explain over the phone. Please come over immediately."

Chapter 50

The Grand Cherokee is moving at a high speed on the empty highway. They pass by fields on either side of the road. Occasionally, one can spot lights from houses located near the highway, but they are few and far between.

The crime scene is in Hongyun Village in Daxin District, about an hour's drive from B City centre.

Bo Jinyan hasn't told Jian Yao much about the phone conversation. She only knows it's an urgent case, and that they have very little information on it at the moment.

Jian Yao is sitting in the passenger seat next to the driver. Bo Jinyan looks calm and collected as usual. Her mind is still thinking about what happened in her room less than an hour ago.

The incoming call was like a bucket of ice water that poured over them. They are completely cooled down after the phone call.

The events of the last few days had been a rollercoaster ride of epic proportions for Jian Yao -

Three days ago, he was still the aloof professor. He didn't know a thing about love. Suddenly, he started pursuing her relentlessly. He successfully captivated her heart, which was already leaning towards him in the first place.

Her brain has been in a state of drowsiness since their....proper first kiss. Then he proceeds, with lightning speed to lead her from her first kiss to her 'first night'...

(NOTE from TB: 'First night' in chinese is often the term use for the day one loses their virginity.)

They've only been together for three days, and she ends up in bed with the guy! Bo Jinyan is definitely a 'bad influence'. She never imagined that she will behave this way.

It's hard to imagine this prim and proper man driving next to her is the same hot and passionate man that was on lying on top of her just a while ago.

Jian Yao blushes. The pace of their development is too fast for her to handle.

So, the phone call came at a timely moment. They would take things a little more slowly, to make sure they are building a relationship that will lasts.

Perhaps she has been quiet for too long. Bo Jinyan says in a cold tone: "I will make the murderer regret what he did."

Jian Yao: "Huh?"

Bo Jinyan says with a cold smile: "He chose to kill during such an important moment for me."

- Important moment?

She laughs. He is still angry.

She recalls. After the phone call, they quickly got dressed. When he came out of his room, his handsome face was still red, and there was still an obvious bulge in his trousers....

He turns to look at her: "I won't make you wait too long." He said in a low voice.

Jian Yao: ".... It's ok. There's no hurry."

Bo Jinyan pauses. He notices a micro-expression on her face.

He asks: "Do you regret it?"

Jian Yao retorts "No... it's just that..."

"Is it me? Is there something I've done that's not good enough?" He asks in an incredibly pompous tone.

Jian Yao answers immediately: "Of course not. You are great."

He sweeps her a look: "I thought so. Then what is the reason?"

Jian Yao thinks for a while, then holds his hand on the steering wheel.

"It's not that I am unwilling." She laughs uncomfortably. "It's just that... it seems unreal."

We are finally together. And tonight... you almost...

This is how she feels in her heart. There's no other meaning to it. But to her surprise, Bo Jinyan looks dumbfounded.

"Oh.."

He gives a little sigh of disappointment.

Jian Yao doesn't understand why he gave such a response. But there's no time to ask. The phone rings again. She picks it up.

Bo Jinyan is driving, but his heart is covered by a layer of melancholy.

She said it felt unreal.

His techniques are not good enough?

His moods plunges after Jian Yao's comments. When the team leader gets a 'more cold than usual' reception from Bo Jinyan, he more or less guessed what they were doing when he called them earlier. He thought it would be wise to keep to the topic: "Let's have a look at the crime scene."

And Bo Jinyan's response is

He starts walking to the area fenced off the police. A smile appears on his handsome face: "Well... come on then." He turns back to hurry them along.

They are used to seeing a proud and not very friendly Bo Jinyan, but they have never seen him behave like this before. There's like a layer of cold air around him. And there's mockery and contempt in his tone.

What's up with him?

Jian Yao stands behind him. She finds it amusing. This murderer will be caught in record breaking time.

There are ten villages in Daxin District. Hongyun Village is one of them. There's nothing special or famous about this village compared to the other ones. Even though, it's geographically part of B City, it's a rural village that's far away from town. There is an unsealed road that leads to the house.

There are not many street lamps in that area. And the lightbulbs are low voltage bulbs. All the villagers are standing behind the cordon area to find out what happened. Jian Yao scans the neighbourhood. The closest neighbour is approximately fifty metres away.

The house at the crime scene is a farmhouse made with red bricks. The entrance is just a wooden gate, it would have been easy for the murderer to access the house. The interior looks old and shabby.

Jian Yao and Bo Jinyan walks toward the gate. A young officer rushes past them. His face is sickeningly pale. He leans over by the wall and starts to vomit.

Jian Yao's heart twinges. Bo Jinyan takes a quick look at the officer and walks on.

An older officer recognises Jian Yao. He pauses and asks: "Jian Yao, are you sure you want to go inside? It's rather ...chaotic." Another older officer also adds: "Perhaps you should stay here."

Jian Yao already knows the whole family had been brutally killed. She stops and think for a while. Bo Jinyan looks at her.

"I'll go in."

"She'll go in."

They said together.

A smile appears on both of their faces.

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Once Jian Yao steps inside the house, she holds her breath.

There is a strong smell of blood in the room, covering the original grassy scents from the countryside. Lying near Jian Yao is a man drenched in blood. His head has been chopped off, and rolled to the side of a coffee table. On the sofa, an elderly man lies motionless. Between the bedroom door and the corridor, there's the body of a naked woman. Her clothes are taken off and dumped onto the floor next to

her. There are a lot of wounds on her body, more than any of the other bodies.

The bodies of two children, the son and nephew of the owner lies in the bedroom. They look like they have been stabbed to death.

According to forensic results, all five victims died under the same knife. Time of death is around four hours ago - 9pm. Each body was stabbed more than ten times. Besides the owner being beheaded, his wife's body wounds shows that she was attacked the most times - even her breasts and private parts had knife wounds.

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From the evidence they have gathered so far, cases that involves the death of the whole family can be classified into the following types:

1. Conflict between family members - Father kills the son's family, husband kills the wife's family, neighbours murdering the family that lives next door...
2. Money issues - Thief or robbers killing the family when they tries to resist.
3. Unsolved mysteries - where members mysteriously disappears or dies. There's no suspects or witnesses

Type 1 cases are the most common.

The killer left behind a lot of evidence in this house. There is a long knife, with visible fingerprints on it. From the position of the prints, it is highly likely that they have found the weapon.

Next, a man's jacket. The jacket is black and dirty. It's so dirty that you can't tell what is its original colour. And it's soaked with blood.

Then there are some bowls with leftover food that have bloody fingerprints on them.

The closet in the room looks like it's been searched. There are bloody fingerprints there too.

Lastly, the police found a lot of bloody footprints that, after initial analysis, belong to the same person. From the footprints, they can tell the shoes are worn out. And it most possibly belongs to a male. A young adult.

So, there are lots of clues for the police to follow up on.

The Team leader says to Bo Jinyan: "Professor Bo, I have some questions about the case. I've arranged for the following to be done: DNA matching, fingerprints analysis..."

Jian Yao knows these procedures take time. It can be days or even up to a month before they will get the results.

"Secondly, I've talked to all the neighbours. They get on with everyone in the village. At this point, we don't think it's done by one of the neighbours. Of course we will continue to talk to everyone in the village, and ask if anyone can recognise the weapon and the jacket we found."

"Thirdly, I have requested for more officers from other stations to help us search the nearby area. We have set up road blocks on the highways to check all incoming and outgoing vehicles in the area."

Bo Jinyan nods: "Good job." Jian Yao is impressed too. The Team Leader has considered all the different angles of the investigation.

Bo Jinyan seldom gives praises to people. The Team Leader smiles. Then he gets to the point: "But there are a few things that are not right. Why is the owner of the house beheaded? And why did the killer mutilate his wife? And the bowls with the bloody finger nails..."

“You have made the correct decision.” Bo Jinyan interrupts him “By the time you wait for the results from the DNA matching, it’s too late. Get your men over here. I will give you a criminal profile now. Every minute counts.”

Chapter 51

2am.

Officers and residents fill the tiny Hongyun Village. The officers are listening to Bo Jinyan’s briefing. The residences are standing near the crime scene, discussing amongst themselves.

Bo Jinyan takes off his jacket. He stands on front of the crowd, like he is about to present an academic paper. He takes a quick look at the crowd and starts:

“The suspect is a male, between the age of 25-35, thin....”

The officers are impressed. This matches the opinions from the forensic team. The forensic team also said that the killer is between 165 to 175cm.

“... He may look like he suffers from malnutrition. He is dirty, probably has not had a shower or bath for days. You should be able to identify him from a crowd quite easily. He has a history of mental illness, even possibly been diagnosed to have paranoid schizophrenia and delusions. In the past year, he would have stayed at a mental institution. You should match your DNA samples with hospital records first.

Education level: Junior or senior high school. He doesn't have a job. He might be doing contract work or is dependant on family or the state for financial assistance. He most probably lives alone. But there is a small possibility that he lives with other family members. He is withdrawn, with not much contact with the neighbours. But the neighbours should recognise him because of his strange behaviours.

He doesn't drive. And since there's no traces of any bicycle tracks or other vehicles tracks, he probably walked here. So he lives quite close to this village. His house is very messy, probably full of rubbish. That's all. You should leave now."

His speech is fast and concise. He almost finished the whole briefing in one breath. All the officers are stunned.

Jian Yao is used to seeing him in 'work' mode. After hearing the briefing, she knows it's not going to take long for the killer to be arrested. And in her mind, a picture of what the killer looks like begins to form - like a tramp you might occasionally see on a street; dirty, with messy hair; mental unstable, might look a little scary, may even flash his body in front of strangers....

Even though Bo Jinyan asked the officers to 'leave now', nobody is moving.

"Why?" Some officers are asking.

"There is no time to explain!" Bo Jinyan interrupts them. "He is most likely wandering nearby, or has gone home to sleep. We must catch him before he kills again. My assistant will email you a more detailed report soon. Now, go!"

Suddenly everyone senses the urgency of the matter. They quickly leave.

Bo Jinyan turns to say to Jian Yao: "Back to the car."

They are inside the car, separated with the noise and action outside by the thick tinted glass windows.

Jian Yao has her notebook ready.

After the briefing, Bo Jinyan is not as hurried as he was before. He leans back and picks up a bottle of water. He opens the lids and drinks some. Then he passes it to Jian Yao: "Here, have some."

Jian Yao realises then, that her throat is very dry too. She let Bo Jinyan hold the bottle for her and drinks a few mouthfuls.

Bo Jinyan has a smile on her face. When she has finished drinking the water, he throws the bottle to the back of the car: "Can you handle the report yourself?"

Jian Yao: "... not yet."

Bo Jinyan looks at her, and says: "I am still feeling uncomfortable."

His sudden swap from 'professor' to 'her man' mode. Jian Yao blushes and laughs at the same time.

She gently holds his hand: "I have some thoughts, but I am not entirely certain. Please help me out."

He is obviously less grumpy now: "It's a simple case."

Jian Yao keeps quiet. She waits for him to continue. Besides, my boyfriend. It's for your own good. Something to distract you from your 'uncomfortableness'.

"Today, today's lesson is: Criminal psychology is not always a logical deduction. Details are important, of course, but if you can grasp the big picture, it will help speed up the investigation. Criminal psychology is an art, not science. When we can link their unusual behaviours with their characteristics/personalities, then we can successfully profile them.

These clues might be buried in a seemingly complicated crime scene. And what you need to do is to discover them. I wrote a thesis on

this in 2010, published in the annual report of the Federal Association for Behavior Analysis.” He looks at her: “If you need it, I can give you my original copy.”

Jian Yao smiles: “Oh, thanks.”

- Of course she will be happy to keep it. It’s monument of his wisdom.

“For example. In the killer machine case, what behaviours best reveal the killers’ psychological characteristics?”

Jian Yao: “.... cutting up the bodies?”

Bo Jinyan gives a small smile: “Correct!”

Jian Yao remembers what Bo Jinyan said before: “...the desires of his heart will be ‘written’ on the bodies...” After finding the bodies, they realised the killer did not torture or harm them in any other ways. Therefore ‘cutting the body’ helped them to sketch the picture of a serial killer dreamed of being a killer, hiding amongst the crowds, preying...

“What about Huo Xiao Lu?” Bo Jinyan asks.

A lot of elements in the case comes to her mind: successfully slitting her throat with just one try, the multiple stab wounds, the love triangle...

“Don’t contemplate for too long.” He says: “What is the first thing that comes to your mind?”

“Jealousy.” Jian Yao quickly says: “the deep wounds on the victim’s face.” That’s the distinctive element, which led them to profile the killer as a girl that is emotional unstable, rather than a boy in need of money.

Bo Jinyan's long finger is tapping on the bottle of mineral water, making 'tonk' sounds. She notices his hand actions. He must be in a better mood now.

He looks at her: "You should thank me. See, you have become wiser."

Jian Yao tries hard not to laugh. She squeezes his hand: "Please continue."

He looks down at her hand squeezing his, he says slowly: "For this case, what's the distinguished elements?"

Jian Yao answers: "Mmm... Chaos, brutality."

Bo Jinyan lifts up his head to look at her: "See, it's not a hard question at all."

He lifts his brows and starts composing his 'written' report:

"The more appropriate phrases for describing the crime scene is: No logic, uncontrollable desires."

I mentioned in the killer machine case. Psychopaths can be divided into two types: organised and unorganised. Sung Yu belongs to the former - carefully planned, fixed way of luring and killing his victims. But this killer - messy crime scene, no logic.. from the evidence, he probably ate the leftover food and changed his clothes. He didn't not consider if he would be exposed. Even a primary school kid knows it's important to wipe off the fingerprints. So whether he knew this family or not, whether they had some arguments between them or not, he is a typical 'unorganised' psychopath.

Murderers like him usually has mental illness. I said he is thin and suffer from malnutrition because most longterm mental patients don't have a good appetite. And studies show that those who are thin are more likely to develop schizophrenia.

These people are exposed to mental pressure for a long period of time. They don't care about their appearance and tidiness.

Aged between 25-35 years old. This point, I have mentioned before during the killer machine case. Their illness is developed during adolescence. There's a gestation period of around ten years before it gets to this stage. He is not any older as he would have done other crimes by now due to the development of his mental state. This is the first time this area encounters these type of cases, which means this is his first killing.

Because of his mental capabilities, the chances of him getting into university is very low. He can't stay at a job, and of course, won't be able to find a girlfriend easily.

Driving is a dangerous activity for him. Besides, the neighbour did not hear any automobile sounds. He walked to the house. Because he has lost his ability to organise, and is living in a state of fantasy, he will not consider the danger of crime. There is no planning, his killing is a spontaneous decision. And I believe he lives nearby.

Lastly. The physical abuse. Beheading the owner, and inflicting injury on his wife's private parts, is a sign of releasing his desires and suppressions. We do not know currently what he is fantasising about, but I think it is to do with revenge and sexual desires."

It is hard to digest all the things he said in a short period of time. And he is speaking very quickly today. Why is this?

"That's great." It is still important to give him some praise.

Bo Jinyan smiles.

- Huh..... of course.

Male likes to display their strength in front of female. Peacocks arch into magnificent fans, high school boys will play a better basketball game when the girls are watching...

And Mr.Bo Jinyan feels the need to show off his superior abilities in criminal psychology to make up for the criticism he received regarding his bedroom skill.

Seeing that she is still stunned, Bo Jinyan taps her and says: "What are you waiting for? Write it down for the police."

Jian Yao: "There's too much information in one go. Speak slowly. I didn't get all of it just now." Then she adds: "Next time, can you please slow down as you speak."

Bo Jinyan: "..."

— — — — —

Jian Yao completes the report and passes it to one of the officers.

She is standing next to wall in the courtyard. A staff is taking out a black bag with one of the bodies in it.

Even though she was keeping calm just now, she was controlling herself to focus and calm down. Now that all the work has been done, there is 'space' in her mind. The gruesome scenes reappeared in her mind. Suddenly, she feels there is a nauseating feeling in her chest.

She bents over and starts vomiting.

Most of the people have left the crime scene by now. One can still hear the footsteps and voices of a few officers nearby.

The position of where she is standing faces a forest. She thought she saw a black shadow going past. It's dark. The leaves rustle as the wind blows. She looks more closely, but it seems there is nothing.

She remembers Bo Jinyan's words. The killer may be nearby. Suddenly she tenses up. Chills are running down her spines.

"What are you afraid of?" A familiar voice from her back: "Vomit. It will make you feel better."

Such a condescending tone.

Suddenly, she feels fine. The fear and the sick feeling is gone. She rinses her mouth with water, then she turns round and look at him: "I am ok now."

Bo Jinyan nods. They walk back to the car together. Jian Yao asks: "When you were working for the FBI, did you throw up?"

She remembers Fu Ziyu told her that when Bo Jinyan first started working with the FBI, he did.

Bo Jinyan pauses and answers: "The first time."

Then he frowns and adds: "That morning, I had some fish that was not fresh. It took me a whole day to get over it."

Jian Yao: "Oh...."

So, it's nothing to do with the case? This man is born to work in this field.

They get back into the car.

"What are we doing next?" Jian Yao asks.

Bo Jinyan adjusts their seats so they can lie down straight. "Sleep." He says.

Jian Yao understands his work system now. Arresting criminals is the job of the police. They are there to provide in depth analysis. So it's time to rest and recuperate. Then when the police needs them, they can give their best.

She nods and says goodnight.

Bo Jinyan looks at her. "Goodnight."

Jian Yao takes a look at him. Her handsome and capable boyfriend. She smiles and closes her eyes.

Then she hears his steady and evenly breathing sounds...

"I will make the necessary adjustments. You don't have to worry." He says.

Jian Yao is puzzled by the statement. She turns around and see him wearing the sleep mask.

He opens his mouth again: "But of course, I will need a bit of time."

Jian Yao is so confused: "Adjustments... for what?"

Bo Jinyan bites his bottom lips.

"Sleep." He says. Then he turns his head to the side facing away from her, and pulls up the blanket to wrap around himself.

Jian Yao thinks about what he just said. Ah.... she told him he was speaking too fast when they were doing the report for the officers.

- Oh, such trivial matters. Yet he remembers and even give her a promise that he will improve. He is ... so sweet to her.

Bo Jinyan, on the other hand, has different ideas in his head.

He knows he lacks experience in bed. And he has no knowledge in the area. That's why she feels its 'unreal'.

But up-skilling is one of his strength.

Don't worry, he will prove it to her in action after the case is solved.

— — — — —

They are woken up by a phone call.

She grabs her mobile phone. Bo Jinyan takes off his sleep mask. They are both sitting up straight.

The sky is still dark. The roads are quiet and empty. Except for two officers that are left to guard the crime scene, the rest have gone to find the killer.

The call is from one of the officers. Jian Yao presses the speaker button.

"Jian Yao, please let Professor Bo know. We have just received reports of another killing. It's approximately 8kms away from where you are now. Again, the whole family is killed. We are not sure of the details yet. We are on our way there. The police officer at the scene tells us that it has many similarity with our case, including what happened to the couple that owns the house. All the killings are done by just one person. Time of death is approximately two hours after our case."

Jian Yao's heart sinks. This means after the first murders, the killer went on to the second house, even before they arrived the first crime scene.

Bo Jinyan is enraged. He starts the car and makes a quick U turn and onto the highway. He does not say anything for minutes, then lets out a loud swear: "Fxxx!"

Chapter 52

A distance of 8km should take less than 5 minutes to reach.

Bo Jinyan is driving with a stern face. Jian Yao looks out the window - houses, police cars, more fields... they fade away quickly by as Bo Jinyan speeds to their next destination.

Jian Yao is trying to analyse the facts: "After killing the first family, the killer stayed at the crime scene - he ate some food and changed his clothes. It takes time to get to the second house, which means he was only on the road for about thirty minutes. He couldn't have walked there. There's not enough time, and it would attract people's attention. Besides we don't have any eye witness yet.

The second family he killed lived in a quiet road too. Is that part of his criteria? But then, it would imply there is some planning towards his killing. Is our initial deductions wrong?"

This is the first time she doubts Bo Jinyan's reasonings. It's a strange feeling, but looking at him, she feels it's a valid question. Because there is an obvious contradiction.

Bo Jinyan calmly relies: "I cannot be wrong."

Jian Yao: ".....ok."

They arrives the next crime scene. Another farmhouse. The place is cordoned off. A group of police officer stands outside the house. Bo Jinyan says mildly: "Though we did not want to see more killings, the new deaths have help us determine his identity and what he looks like."

Jian Yao is stunned.

Obviously, they are not thinking at the same level. When she felt they have taken a step back in the investigation, Bo Jinyan has in fact taken a huge step forward.

He opens the door, and says to her before he hops off: "Stay close to me."

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The second crime scene has many similarities to the first one. The killer is even more vicious in his assaults. Jian Yao takes a look and wait outside.

After a while, Bo Jinyan comes out. He takes off the gloves that is soaked with blood. He looks at the pale Jian Yao: "If you are still shaken by what you've seen, come into my arms."

There's people surrounding them. Jian Yao hesitates and declines his offer. He looks around and grabs her cold hand: "Are you embarrassed again? Who doesn't know that you are my woman?" He says.

Jian Yao blushes.

Bo Jinyan is obviously very upset at the moment. The killer has caused over ten deaths. He needs to focus on the case, but he is concerned for her at the same time. So even when he speaking about their relationship, his tone is still cold and moody....

She taps his shoulder gently: "Just focus on the case. Don't worry about me. I can take care of myself. I'll be right behind you all the time."

It's supposed to be a considerate statement from a girlfriend.

Bo Jinyan turns to her, and says in his cold voice: "Do you think I am not capable of handling both roles at the same time?" The two roles obviously means 'detective' and 'boyfriend'.

Jian Yao: "....."

He must be angered by this killer. He has been in a bad mood since he left the bedroom. Now it's even worse. Nothing she says can soothe him.

- Never mind. Just leave it. Jian Yao thought to herself. He is probably more efficient when he is grumpy.

A young officer comes up to them: "We found him. Professor Bo, we found him."

Jian Yao heart tightens. Bo Jinyan quickly walks up to a vehicle parked on the side of the road.

It's a vehicle equipped with surveillance equipment. There are a few computers. Technical staff and a few officers crowd around the screens. A young technician points at a paused frame of a video.

Like Bo Jinyan says, they now know his identity and what he looks like.

When reality and deduction don't match, the truth seems to hide under the fog. Some people will start to doubt themselves, making it hard to progress.

But for Bo Jinyan, this is not a problem. He is so confident of himself. He is not affected by emotions such as doubt. Deduction and reasoning, for him, is simple and clear: the killer doesn't drive. There are no traces of transport vehicles (eg. tyre marks etc.). No witnesses. There is only one way of getting to the second crime scene.

Bus.

So, he found the killer.

— — — — —

Bo Jinyan leans down and examines the man on the screen.

Even though the image is not very clear, one can tell he is a thin average height man. He is wearing a commonly found black jacket. His hair is messy and he looks a little sluggish.

A young officer says: "Around 10pm, he board the bus in a stop close to the first crime scene. He came off the bus around 10:15am at a stop that's next to the second crime scene."

Another officer adds: "This is a farming village. There's hardly anyone on the bus. Therefore no one saw him."

"Yes, it's him," Bo Jinyan says.

The officers feel more confident after Bo Jinyan confirm their findings. "Found another image." says an officer.

Everyone looks to where he is pointing at. On another monitor, the same man appears.

The police looks at the data: "11:00pm. Location is the Li Yu Transit Station. Not far from the second crime scene."

Everyone is quiet. That's after killing the second family. Where is the killer going next?

It's hard to see from the small image whether his clothes have blood stains on them or not. He stood at the platform and waited. Next to him, there's a sign with all the numbers of the buses that stops at that transit station.

Two buses came his way: 928, 900. He didn't move.

Then 910 appears, he slowly boarded the bus.

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It's only been a few hours, but the police now knows who they are looking for. And they know where he is heading next. This is a huge breakthrough. Everyone is getting excited. The young officer who found the first image of the man said in a loud voice: "We will be able to get him soon."

"Yes!"

"Yes!"

All in agreement. Jian Yao is glad to see the officers so fired up.

"Don't be too happy too soon." Bo Jinyan interrupts them. He does not sound as enthusiastic as the rest of the group.

"This bus route heads to the city." He says faintly. "Our killer has entered into a high density area. There will be people all over the place. Even pedestrians may become his victims. What's there to be excited about?"

— — — — —

In the east the sky was turning white, and the last stars were disappearing over the horizon. A layer of fog hovers on the roads of the farming village.

After leaving the surveillance vehicle, Jian Yao pulls Bo Jinyan's sleeves and says: "Don't you think your words were a little harsh?"

The group of young officers were stirred up until he spoke. After that, they all became quiet. They were still going about their tasks, but they are noticeably discouraged.

“Is that right? But I am only telling the truth. As an officer, they need to be conscious of this.”

“But they are still young. Not every is so quick on the feet like you.” Jian Yao explains. “You are their senior. Give a word of encouragement at time, like the way I encourage you.”

Bo Jinyan sweeps her a look. He doesn't say anything more.

The two of them returns to the car. Once again, it's time to wait.

Jian Yao: “Is there anything you need me to do?”

Bo Jinyan looks at her: “Sleep.” But he opens the map and starts studying it.

Jian Yao asks: “What are you looking for?”

Bo Jinyan marks a few locations with a ballpoint pen. He says: “When he got off the bus near the second crime scene, he was walking towards the transit station. And the house of the second crime scene happens to be on his route.”

Jian Yao's mind is starting to string the pieces together.

Bo Jinyan lifts his head and looks out of the window. He has the answer: “When he killed the first two family, it could be just random acts, or there could be some sort of connections between these families and him. But what we can be sure of, is that, he has totally departed from reality and is now living on his own fantasy world. A world filled with blood and murder.”

Jian Yao is quiet.

Because Jian Yao is leaning towards his side to see the map, when Bo Jinyan puts down the map and lifts his head, the cheeks touched. He looks into her eyes: "Give me a kiss."

Jian Yao takes a quick peep around. There is nobody near. She puts her hands around his neck and pecks him gently on the lips: "Keep up the good work."

Bo Jinyan: "Why are you encouraging me? I have been exceeding everyone's expectations right from the start."

Jian Yao: ".... Just pretend that I didn't say a thing."

After a short wait. There's news.

Bad news, though.

Jian Yao turns her phone to speaker mode: "Professor Bo, according to the CCTV footages provided by the bus company, our suspect got off the bus around 4:30am. We have lost track of him since." He pauses "We are looking at the video footages from the businesses nearby, and we have sent officers to search in the area. But so far, we have nothing."

They have lost him.

Like Bo Jinyan says, when he enters into a big city, it like finding a needle in the haystack.

Bo Jinyan looks at Jian Yao. He recalls what she says earlier.

"Professor Bo, do you have any new instructions for us?" The officer asks.

Bo Jinyan answers: "No. You are doing well. Keep up the good work."

The officer: “.....”

After they finish the call. Jian Yao looks at him with a smile.

Not bad, he is learning fast.

But.... hopefully, the officers don't think he is mocking them...

Jian Yao asks: What should we do now?”

Bo Jinyan picks up the map again: “He is heading towards a destination.”

Jian Yao asks: “How do you know? What makes you think he is not wandering aimlessly?”

Bo Jinyan: “Though he might not be thinking straight anymore, his instincts and subconsciousness still affects his actions. When he was taking the bus, he didn't look at the bus signs. He didn't board the first bus that came past his way. He used the shortest route to walk from one bus stop to the other. This shows he's been on this route before. Now, he is heading to place with vengeance, to seek liberation and to conquer.”

“But how do we know where he is going?

Her phone rings again.

Finally some good news.

“We have the man's identity. His name is Zhang Cheng. 28 years old. He lives in Huang Yun village, where the first crime scene is.” The officer gives them an address.

Bo Jinyan quickly starts the car and drives to his house.

“Home. a place where the deepest secrets are kept.” He says “This holds true for everyone, whether you are normal or you are a psychopath.”

Chapter 53

Bo Jinyan and Jian Yao stands in front of a small house, surrounded by trees. It seems their suspect - Zhang Cheng likes to live in a remote and isolated place, away from people.

Bo Jinyan is the first person to arrive, ahead of the police officer who called him. They can hear the police sirens coming from a distance. They should not be too far behind.

Jian Yao asks: “Should we wait for them?”

“No.” says Bo Jinyan. He puts on a pair of latex gloves. He seems to look excited: “When a lot of people enters the house at the same time, the place loses its originality.”

Jian Yao is not surprised. This man is honest and smart. But when it comes to investigating criminal cases, he can’t cover the excitement that arises from the passion he has for his job.

“Ok. Let’s go in.” She smiles. Of course she will go in with him.

Fortunate for them, the yellow wooden door is not locked. It is easily pushed open. There’s an unbearable stench that rushes to their nostrils once the door is opened. Jian Yao almost vomited again.

Bo Jinyan places his finger over his nose to block out the smell. He walks in without slowing down.

Jian Yao hesitates, then she pinches her nose and follows him inside.

It's dark in there. The windows are blocked. It is a small place. One bed. One desk/table. That's it. There are things lying all over the place. It's too dark to see what they are.

She is stepping into a psychopath's house in darkness. Every step, she is stepping on top of something... the bumps underneath her soles... Jian Yao secretly hopes they are not body parts.

Subconsciously, she gently holds on to Bo Jinyan jacket from the back.

Stay close to him.

The Bo Jinyan that was busy examining the room in the dark pauses. He turns round to look at her .

She quickly grabs on the corner of his suit jacket. She is not letting go of him.

"Oh." he seems to sigh softly in the darkness.

"What's up?" asks Jian Yao.

She can vaguely tell by the light shining through the front door, that he is trying to look at the hand that is grabbing onto his jacket.

"So cute." He says in pleased voice.

Jian Yao blushes in the dark.

Even though she can't see his facial expressions, she knows he is staring at her. And at the same time, a hand reaches the light switch on the wall. He just found it.

Ah.... handling two roles at once.

They are standing in a pigsty.

Light blue bed linen has sweat stains all over it. The duvet is curled up into a bundle on the floor. The table has lots of dirty dishes and bowls with food scraps inside them. On the floor, there are polystyrene takeaway containers, rubbish bags, clothes, shoes... flies everything. There is also a strong stench of urine in the air.

"What a tasteless lunatic." Bo Jinyan mutters to himself. Then he starts searching through the rubbish.

As a woman, Jian Yao automatically take up the tasks that are less filthy - she opens the drawers of the desk and examines what's inside them.

In one of the drawers, she finds a stack of envelope. They are made from the same type of yellow paper. She passes them to Bo Jinyan. The envelopes are empty. In the front of the envelope, there is a date written with ink pen: "2013 January , 2013 February.... "until" 2013 June. The handwriting is the same for all the envelopes. Obviously, it's written by the same person.

Bo Jinyan looks more closely at the stack of envelope. He notices the corner of red note sticking out from one of them. He pulls it out. It's a hundred dollar note.

"This is for living expenses." Bo Jinyan says: "Someone is looking after him."

Bo Jinyan mentioned earlier. Because of his mental state, he won't be able to hold a job for long. To survive, money must come from somewhere. Perhaps it's family members? Passing him some money with an envelope every month.

After a while, Jian Yao finds two pieces of paper that's torn. It's not too badly damaged, so she can still read the words on it:

"Time for dinner."

“Take a shower/bath after the sun has gone down.”

Again, it has the same writing as the envelopes.

Bo Jinyan stands up from examining the pile of rubbish on the floor. He passes a few pieces of paper to her. Like the ones in her hands, there are phrase or short sentences on them. Don't leave the village. Use the toilet, not the floor. etc etc. There are some adhesive tapes on the corners of these paper. They used to be on the wall.

“Male. Educated. Financial status - average. Young adult.” Bo Jinyan looks at the words and comments.

— — — — —

Soon, the officers join them inside the house.

“Professor Bo, have you discovered anything?”

Jian Yao looks at Bo Jinyan. He signals her to show the envelopes and white sheets of paper to the officers: “Someone was looking after him. He was very attentive. But then, the person has not been coming for awhile, or else this place cannot be so messy.” He pauses and continues: “He's abandoned.”

Everyone is quiet.

Is that the reason for his mental breakdown?

The officers scatter to look for other evidence. Jian Yao stands beside Bo Jinyan. She asks: “How do we find out the identify of that person?” Her instinct tells her that the place Zheng Chang is going is somehow linked to this man. Perhaps, he is going find him....

But there seems to be no other clues of the man's identity in the house.

Bo Jinyan sweeps her a look, he says proudly: "Of course there is a way."

He always has a way.

Jian Yao waits hopefully for another speech. He is going to use his expert knowledge and superior elimination skills to....

Wait. He is pushing away rubbish on the desk?

A red colour telephone appears.

"Like I said before, I like taking short cuts." First, he turns on the speaker function. Then he presses the re-dial button.

This is much faster way to find out.

Other officers gather. Everyone waits. But it goes straight to voicemail: "Your phone cannot be used at this stage. Please pay your account...."

It's an older phone. There is no caller display button. So they don't know what the re-dial number is. One of the officers suggest: "I will call the station. We will find the records linked to this phone." Everyone agrees it's a good plan.

Except Bo Jinyan: "It will take too long."

He lifts up the receiver. Takes a quick look at it and passes it to Jian Yao.

There is a small sticker on it, with the number of this telephone on it.

Jian Yao takes out her mobile to load \$100 credit on the number. She never thought that one day she would top up the phone for a psychopath.

Finally, they successfully call the person on re-dial. A man picks up the phone. He is speaking very softly, and he sounds tired: "Cheng, did you not remember what I told you? I will call you later? They are asleep."

Bo Jinyan ponders for a while, then he starts speaking: "Hello. Are you Zheng Chang's brother?"

The person pauses: "Yes. Who are you? Why are you using his phone?" He sounds concerned. "Did something happen to Ah Chang?"

Bo Jinyan answers: "It's a long story. Keep your windows and doors locked. Do not get out of the house. Your brother is on his way to kill you."

The man is shocked: "What?"

The officers next to him is stunned too. Bo Jinyan turns to one of them and says: "Get his address. Send it to me immediately." Then he says to Jian Yao: "Let's go."

Jian Yao follows. She takes a quick look before leaving the house. An officer is explaining the situation to Zheng Chang's brother. Others are getting ready to move to their next destination too.

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Early morning. The roads in the countryside don't have many cars on them. Soon they are back in B city.

Jian Yao took a short nap on the way back.

When she wakes up, Bo Jinyan is still driving. His face looks less tense. His fingers are tapping on the steering wheel. Looks like his mood has improved. Well, they are very close to catching the killer.

"Did anyone call?" She asks.

"No." He answers faintly.

- That's good. That means there's no other causalities so far.

"He has arrived at the neighbourhood for quite some time now." Bo Jinyan says. "It's enough time for him to run around the B city three times."

Jian Yao thinks of the mental unstable killer, hovering near his brother's house...

"They found his medical records." She says. "If the brother cares about him, why doesn't he send him to an institution?"

Not long after they left the house, the police found the file in the rubbish bin. The last visit was early this year.

Bo Jinyan: "I am not sure. But according to official numbers, at least half of the serious mental patients are not receiving any treatment."

Jian Yao is shocked: "Why?"

Bo Jinyan says mockingly: "Because there's not enough bed space*."

- Is this meant to be a joke? But it is not funny at all.

(Note from author Ding Mo - It is a known fact that there are not enough facilities (including doctors, nurses and spaces in the hospital) in China. A lot of the serious mental patients are not granted admission to hospital because of this.)*

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Then they come across another problem. One that frustrates Bo Jinyan greatly. Traffic jam.

They have been on the road for over two hours. They are so close to their destination. Often they can see police officers walking past them. But they are stuck. Only 1km of distance left, yet, it has taken them over ten minutes just to crawl forward a few metres.

Jian Yao just talked to the team leader: "They will send someone to clear a way for the police cars to go through."

Bo Jinyan replies: "Oh great. The rest of the cars will be stuck here for ages."

Jian Yao knows he is just complaining to let out some steam. As the car moves slower, she has more time to observe what's happening on the streets.

About fifty metres ahead of them, beside a flower bed, there is a man sitting down at the corner. He is wearing a black top and a pair of black pants. His hair is messy. Most of the pedestrians are deliberately avoiding getting close to him. He is wearing a pair of grey sport shorts. There are some dark marks on it. Jian Yao looks more carefully. His hands have red stains on them too.

When did he arrive? He wasn't there a moment ago.

Jian Yao calls out to Bo Jinyan: "Jinyan.... that man."

"I see him." Bo Jinyan says coldly.

He quickly turns his steering wheels to drive off the road onto a patch of grass on the side.

"Good boy." Bo Jinyan mutters. He fixes his eye on the man.

Jian Yao starts to get nervous.

At this time, the person that they suspect is Zheng Chang stands up. He walks towards a little lane to the side of the flower bed.

We can't lose him now. Jian Yao takes out her phone and calls the Team leader.

"Don't leave the car."

Jian Yao turns around. Bo Jinyan has opened the door and disappears in the crowd. After a few seconds, she finds him. He is walking into the same lane Zheng Chang went.

Jian Yao suddenly feels worried.

They agreed that they would stay together whenever they are investigating. But he ran off by himself... to go after a mentally unstable killer that has a weapon with him.

Chapter 54

The long street is noisy with a never ending flow of cars, and the hustle and bustle of city walkers. The sun shines brightly in the lane that Bo Jinyan disappeared through just a few minutes ago.

Jian Yao decides to follow. She gets out of the car.

It's dangerous. But she will be careful. Bo Jinyan is an academic. Now he is chasing after a mentally unstable killer. She can't let him go alone.

A thought comes to her mind as she passes through the crowd -

Even though he keeps saying the physical work should be left to the police, every time when he is face to face with the suspects, or sees someone in danger, he would rush to help. He knocked Sun Yong unconscious with a stick, ran over to rescue the boy held captive by Huo Xiao Lu. And this.

Arrogant, but firm in his beliefs.

Jinyan, please stay safe.

She is about go into the lane, when a few officers appear. Jian Yao is relieved. One of the taller officers blocks Jian Yao: "Stay here." Then he and three other officers hurried into the narrow lane.

Jian Yao anxiously looks in. Behind her, a lot of pedestrians are gathering. It's too far away for Jian Yao to see exactly what is happening. The police officers are blocking her view. She can vaguely work out there's lot of movements, and then she hears a 'dong' sound, like something has fallen on to the ground.

"Don't move. Don't move. Put down your knife." She hears the police shout out.

Jian Yao's heart tightens. She sees Bo Jinyan's face for a split second. Then more police officers rush past her. Her views are completely blocked.

"We got him. We got him." Someone yelled out.

"Stay down!"

"Someone is injured. Please send an ambulance." Someone else says.

Jian Yao runs towards the officers and tries to squeeze past them to get to Bo Jinyan: "Excuse me. Excuse me... I am Professor Bo's assistant."

“The Professor is hurt too.” Someone said.

This is not good news. She pushes through even harder. People start to make way. She sees four or five officers holding on a man with blood shot eyes. He is still struggling to break free as the officers walk him towards the street to the police car. Jian Yao quickly stands to the side to let them pass. She recognises him from the photos emailed to them by the police. That’s Zheng Chang.

She hurries forward to find an officer lying on the ground. He has been stabbed in the stomach. There is a pool of blood beside him. He looks very pale. He is still conscious, breathing heavily and obviously in pain. Bo Jinyan stands next to him. There’s blood smeared on his face and suit. A few officers are standing around him.

Jian Yao’s heart aches as she sees blood dripping down to the ground from Bo Jinyan’s sleeves.

“What happened to you? Are you ok?” She asks anxiously. She wants to hold his hand, but she is afraid she might accidentally touch the wound. She looks closer. There is a knife wound from his left shoulder that extends to his chest.

She looks at the officer lying on the floor. His wounds are much more serious.

“I am ok. It’s just a flesh wound.” Bo Jinyan says to her.

When Bo Jinyan entered the lane, there was another policeman who was going towards Zheng Chang from the opposite direction. The police officer thought he looked suspicious too. The two of them tried to stop Zheng Chang. The policeman was stabbed in the stomach, and Bo Jinyan has a deep cut on his arm. Fortunately, more officers appeared at the right moment.

The medics arrives with stretcher. They attend to the officer on the ground first. Then one of them asks Bo Jinyan: "Do you need a stretcher too?" Bo Jinyan looks at her arrogantly: "Of course not."

Jian Yao didn't see what actually happened, but she can imagine how dangerous it must have been. She looks at his arm again. She asks gently: "Is it very painful?"

Bo Jinyan looks at her pale face. He starts walking towards the main street: "Not really. Let's go."

Jian Yao follows suspiciously. There is still blood coming from his wound. Even though he can still walk freely but the wound is probably quite a deep one.

This man....

She walks up to him and says: "You are so brave."

Bo Jinyan smiles back at her: "Of course."

Jian Yao laughs. She whispers in his ears: "So... does it hurt?"

Bo Jinyan pauses. He decides not to reply this time.

Two medics walk up to him. The ambulance is just behind them. Bo Jinyan follows them to the vehicle. Then he turns round to say to Jian Yao: "Don't come with me."

Jian Yao is stunned: "Why?"

Bo Jinyan says calmly: "That goes without saying. Zheng Chang is the first unorganised psychopath we encountered in China. And he is alive. I need you to follow up with his psychological assessment."

Jian Yao stands by the pavement. A police car stops in front of her. An officer opens the passenger door for her: "We'll give you a ride to the station."

She nods and gets into the car. Then she takes out her phone to call FZY. "Ziyu, Jinyan is injured....yes... on the way to the hospital. Ok. I will come over to find you once I finish what I need to do."

FZY will look after him. She feels better now.

On the ambulance -

Bo Jinyan is lying down on a stretcher. His eyes are closed.

Just seeing the scars on his body made her cry. How could he let her follow him to the hospital? She will bury him with her tears.

As he is thinking of Jian Yao, the medical staff is taking off his jacket to examine the wound.

"It's quite serious." says one of the medics. "You should have used a stretcher."

Bo Jinyan sweeps them a look.

"You must lie down flat from now on. Don't move anymore." He says to Bo Jinyan. He cuts away his shirt. Some of the dry blood is stuck to the fabric. When the medic was peeling it off, Bo Jinyan can't help but frown.

Oh...

Jian Yao, it's actually very painful.

— — — — —

In the interrogation room. Zheng Chang is cuffed onto a chair. He has a gloomy look on his face, and his eyes are dull.

Two officers are facing him. Jian Yao and a few others, including some doctors from the mental health institutes are listening in the next room separated by dark non see through glass.

“Why are you killing people?” Asks the officer.

Zheng Chang looks confused: “Why did I kill people? I need to take revenge.”

The two officers look at each other: “Why?”

Zheng Chang says quietly: “My brother. He has been assassinated.”
“Who assassinated him?”

“Agents. They are American agents, disguised as Chinese. They were trying to send codes back to US. It was very loud. I discovered them.”

The two officers don’t know what to say. They move on to the next question: “Why did you stab the women in their private parts?”

Zheng Chang pauses. He is not speaking.

Then gradually, his face becomes red. He starts to scream and yell. The two officers are startled by his behaviour. They asked him to stop. But Zheng Chang is getting more and more agitated. He tries to struggle and break free...

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When Jian Yao leaves the room, she sees a forty year old man sitting quietly with his head down. He looks worried. His hands are grabbing the hair on his head.

Besides him sit a woman in her thirties. She is scolding him in a low voice: "Look what has happened. He is killing people. I knew your brother is nothing but trouble. I told you to leave him alone. To leave him alone. Let the state deal with it. But you insisted you should take care of him."

The man looks out and retaliates: "Shut up! If it's not because I left him for you for the last few months, his condition would not have worsen."

"You are blaming me?" The woman slaps him on the face.

— — — — —

Jian Yao's heart is saddened by the family's story.

It is actually a simple one.

A normal family that has a child with mental illness. It gradually put stress on their financial situation. When his parents were still around, there were three people took turns to look after Zheng Chang - dad, mom, elder brother. They could still cope.

After the parents passed away, Zheng Chang became the sole responsibility of the elder brother. A thirty year old man, spending almost all his earnings on his brother. No girl would come near him.

Finally, he found a girlfriend. The bride's only condition was not to live with the younger brother in the same house. He thought about it, and decided, after all the years of sacrificing, he will do something for himself.

But what about his brother? Private hospitals are too expensive, and he doesn't qualify for longterm public hospital care. Also, he is afraid the brother might be mistreated in the hospital. His wife was not keen to send him to the hospital either. But for a different reason. She is afraid

the hospital would charge extra fees which they would have to be responsible for. That's a lifelong burden!

The problem dragged on. In the first few months after the wedding, the elder brother would sneak out to see Zheng Chang. Lately, his pregnant wife demanded more attention, so he had not seen Zheng Chang for two months. His wife had a hidden agenda for keeping him close to her. She secretly hoped that he would leave the brother alone and not have any contact with him anymore.

So Zheng Chang was alone in the house for a few months. The brother he was waiting for never turned up. His mental state worsens and his world collapsed.

My brother is dead. He thought to himself. I have to take revenge.

— — — — —

When Jian Yao leaves the station to go to the hospital, it's past 6:00pm.

The last rays of the afternoon sun casts a golden glow on the tall buildings. The windows are bright and reflexive in the light. Jian Yao is feeling a little lethargic. Perhaps it's because she hasn't slept all night? Or perhaps she is still thinking about the case?

She received a call from Fu Ziyu earlier.

"The doctors asked him to stay in the hospital for a week." Fu Ziyu said. "But he insisted he wanted to go home."

She takes out the front door keys. Just before she unlocks the door, she thinks of something. She takes her phone out and calls the Police Team Leader: "Officer, is there anything unusual in either of the crime scenes or Zheng Chang's house?"

The officer replies: "No, no codes written in blood, no English words... we didn't find anything unusual."

Jian Yao hangs up and feels much better. Two cases. No more messages. "He must be dead."

She walks into the apartment. There is light in the lounge, but it is empty. Bo Jinyan is not there. Then she hears some sound coming from his bedroom.

She removes her shoes and walk into the master bedroom. Two men turn to look at her.

Bo Jinyan has changed into his black pyjamas, lying straight in bed. There are a few more pillows than usual under his head and upper back. His face is pale. He stares at her with his bright black eyes.

Fu Ziyu stands to the corner of the bed. He smiles at Jian Yao and asks: "How's work?"

Jian Yao smiles back: "Good." She walks to the bed and looks at Bo Jinyan. But she is asking Fu Ziyu: "How is he?"

"Minor injury." Fu Ziyu says "About twenty stitches."

Jian Yao frowns. Bo Jinyan frowns too.

"Thanks, big mouth. You can go now." He says faintly, "Close the door and don't disturb us. Thank you."

Jian Yao glances at him, then turns to say to Fu Ziyu: "You know what he is like. Let's have dinner together."

Fu Ziyu is not one bit bothered by his best friend's abandonment: "No, I will get going. I have no intention of hanging around watching you guys smooch. But..."

He looks at Bo Jinyan: "Your wounds became more serious because you kept moving around after the injury. Now please listen to your doctor and rest. Jian Yao, please watch him so he won't do anything stupid anymore."

Bo Jinyan looks at him coldly. Jian Yao replies quickly: "Of course."

After Fu Ziyu leaves, Jian Yao asks Bo Jinyan: "So, what are the doctor's orders?"

Bo Jinyan slowly answers her: "Less fish. What else can it be."

Jian Yao laughs: "Oh... that would be hard for you."

There are two opposing views to eating fish when recovering from stab wounds. One school of thought is that it might cause infection. But others think that it's full of vitamins and proteins so it will help muscle recovery. Perhaps Fu Ziyu is trying to hassle him by saying he can't have fish.

Bo Jinyan doesn't want to talk about this anymore. He says to her: "Come and sit by me."

Jian Yao shakes her head: "Let me take a shower first." How can she sit on his bed with the same clothes that she wore to Zheng Chang's house?

Bo Jinyan: "Then give me a kiss first?"

Jian Yao: "No. You stay there. Don't move."

He watches her as she walks into the bathroom.

Bo Jinyan gives a sigh.

His mobility is affected, so he can't walk up to kiss her whenever he wants. But what's worse is...

Not strenuous exercise for a week....Shit!

Chapter 55

A cool night.

After shower, Jian Yao is ready for bed. It's been two long days without a proper sleep for her. She stands outside Bo Jinyan's bedroom door and says to him: "I am going to bed now. Call me if you need my help. Goodnight."

Bo Jinyan is lying on his bed, watching a documentary on TV. He turns to look at her and asks: "Where are you sleeping tonight?"

Jian Yao blushes, then answers: "My room, of course."

Bo Jinyan picks up the remote and presses the pause button. He look at her and says: "As I recall, before the case, there is probably not a part of your body I haven't kissed or touched for at least three times. And as for the important parts.... let me think..."His raises his brows: "...eight times."

Jian Yao blushes: "Stop! Why are you telling me this?"

This man... he counts how many times he kisses her?

Bo Jinyan smiles: "Because of my love for you, and my understanding on how much human desires closeness and passion. You have to admit that we have developed a very intimate relationship... physically. So, we should sleep on the same bed."

Jian Yao: “.....”

The most embarrassing in the world would be to hear Bo Jinyan talk about sex. He is so blunt and straight forward, with no consideration for how it will make her feel.

Jian Yao: “I might move around in my sleep and accidentally touch your wound. The priority right now is to make sure you have a speedy recovery. So we need to sleep in separate rooms.”

They are still looking into each others eyes.

Bo Jinyan: “That’s nonsense. The last time I held you in my arm, you didn’t move at all.”

Jian Yao: “Well, just in case. We can’t risk it. Good night.”

Bo Jinyan keeps quiet this time.

Jian Yao says before she leaves: “.... if there’s nothing else you need me to do, I’ll go now. Goodnight.”

After a couple of steps into the corridor. She can hear his voice: “Are you not even going to give me a good night kiss?” He says in a dissatisfied and pompous tone.

Jian Yao laughs and turns back to him.

In the soft light, he looks good in his black pyjamas. She bends down: “Close your eyes.”

He looks at her and closes his eye lids.

When her lips are about to touch his, she notices the corners of his lips curl up to a little smile.

Jian Yao feels warm and fuzzy in the heart.

Bo Jinyan. I am happy. Because you are happy.

— — — — —

The next morning.

A bright sunny day. The whole of B city is enjoying the warmth the sun brings on this lovely autumn day. Fu Ziyu parks his Lexus in the apartment carpark. He walks over to open the door for Yin Ziqi: "We are here."

Yin Ziqi is wearing a navy blue dress today, with a white scarf, and a pair of heels. She looks concerned: "Did you get a helper? Who is looking after him?"

Fu Ziyu holds on to her hand to help her balance as she gets out of the car: "That's alright. Jian Yao is there. They are living together."

He notices Yin Ziqi looks a little strange when she heard that.

Oh.. Bo Jinyan has not informed his sister yet. If she knew how different her little brother behaves around Jian Yao nowadays, she will be horrified. The block of ice that has turned into a flaming magma - french kissed his girlfriend on day one, successfully persuaded her to move in with him on day two, and almost made out on day three!

When Bo Jinyan told him about falling in love with Jian Yao, he choked and made a fool of himself. He wants to see what sort of reaction the elegant Yin Ziqi might give. So he just says: "Well, she is his assistant, so it's part of her job description to look after him."

And Bo Jinyan does not disappoint him.

Before he left yesterday, Bo Jinyan gave him a spare key to his house so that 'Jian Yao won't have to rush around to open the door for Fu Ziyu.'

So when he opens the door, the picture they see is Bo Jinyan leaning down on the chaise near the window. Jian Yao is sitting next to him. She is holding a bowl, and spoon feeding him congee. At that moment, the spoon is in Bo Jinyan's mouth.

This is a normal scene of someone looking after an injured person. But Jian Yao's slightly blushing face and the smile that is in Bo Jinyan's gaze adds a certain ambiguity to the atmosphere.

When Jian Yao sees Fu Ziyu, she quickly pulls the spoon out of his mouth.

"hu hum..." Fu Ziyu clears his throat: "Jinyan, your sister is here."

Yin Ziqi obviously saw Jian Yao spoon-feeding him too. She senses there is something between them, but she pretends she didn't notice.

Bo Jinyan looks to his sister and gives her a nod. Then he turns back to Jian Yao: "Don't be distracted. Continue."

Jian Yao feels a little uneasy. She shoves the bowl into Bo Jinyan's hand. "You can do it yourself." Then she stands and smiles to Yin Ziqi: "Hi. Please take a seat. I'll make some tea."

Yin Ziqi smiles back: "Thank you." Then she turns to her brother. Before she gets a chance to speak, she can hear his voice. Although, he doesn't seem to be talking to her. "They have hands, leave them to do it themselves... Oh! Are you shy again.... You can imagine they are not here."

Jian Yao blushes even more: "Shut up!" She turns to Yin Ziqi: "Sorry, he's been a little hard to please since his injuries."

Apologising for Bo Jinyan has become a habit of Jian Yao's - from the little kid on the day they played fireworks, to soothing the police officers because of his harsh comments, to handling family members that he helped saved but don't want to meet...

But in Yin Ziqi's ears, her apologies represent something different.

She has always been a sensible person. After being kissed by the Flower Cannibal No.2, she is well aware that the most dangerous part of the whole event is not the Flower Cannibal, but how moved she felt when she mistook the Flower Cannibal for Bo Jinyan.

So for a long time, she did not contact Bo Jinyan. Until today, when she heard about his injuries.

She is Bo Jinyan's sister. Jian Yao is only his assistant. But she is apologising on to her on his behalf?

She smiles and look towards Fu Ziyu for an answer.

Fu Ziyu refuses to get involved. He simply gives a "I don't know. But you know what your brother is like" look to her.

Yin Ziqi takes a seat next to Bo Jinyan. He has lost weight since she last saw him. She can see the top of the bandage showing just below his neckline. Her heart feels for him.

"How did you end up hurting yourself so badly?" She frowns as she asks Bo Jinyan.

Bo Jinyan glances her a look. He is not planning to answer the question.

Fu Ziyu also takes a seat on the sofa. He is waiting for the sister's reaction when she knows about their relationship. Jian Yao takes out two cups of tea from the kitchen and places them on the coffee table.

"Did you forget what happened last time?" Qin Ziqi says softly. "We were so worried for you. You can't let yourself be hurt anymore."

This time Bo Jinyan answers: "I will do my best."

— — — — —

Jian Yao has returned to the kitchen cut up some fruits for everyone. The three of them are chatting in the lounge.

Yin Ziqi says: "Do you want to move back to the villa for now? The servants there can better look after you."

Fu Ziyu knows she is fishing for information. He laughs.

As expected, Bo Jinyan answers straight away: "No."

Yin Ziqi looks at him: "Ok then, I will employ a professional nurse to look after you. Jian Yao can't handle the task by herself. You have to rest in bed. Besides, she is a girl. How can she meet all your personal needs?"

The two of them looks at Bo Jinyan. He has a strange look on his face.

"Oh..." He says softly.

Yin Ziqi is puzzled: "What is it?"

His handsome face has sly smile: "Personal needs - I didn't think about it. This is where I can take advantage of the situation. Thanks for the reminder."

“Ha ha ha...” Fu Ziyu is hysterical. Yin Ziqi is still wondering what he means.

After a while, she starts laughing too: “Did I miss something here?”

Bo Jinyan suddenly remembers the his sister does not know about his love interest yet. So he says: “Isn’t this obvious? I am in love.”

Even though it’s his second time hearing the statement, Fu Ziyu chokes again.

Yin Ziqi’s smile freezes. After a while, she turns to look at Fu Ziyu: “Can I have a moment with him?”

Fu Ziyu stands up: “Sure.”

Jian Yao walks out with the platter. Fu Ziyu says to her: “Jian Yao, let’s go get some lunch for all of us.” Jian Yao senses the siblings want some time in private, so she agrees.

After they leave the apartment, Bo Jinyan is the first to speak: “What is it? Another murder in your company?”

Yin Ziqi says: “Of course not.” She smiles: “I am just surprised, to hear about you and Jian Yao.”

Bo Jinyan asks: “Why are you surprised? I am normal healthy man.”

Yin Ziqi pauses, then she says: “Congratulations.”

“Thank you.”

She smiles again: “I am not trying to interfere with your private life. But because it’s the first time you are in a relationship, I have a question to ask you. Are you sure she is right girl for you?”

Bo Jinyan: "Why are you asking?"

"You are a fine young man. Many women will consider you a good catch. Jian Yao is a good girl too. But I do have one hesitation." She looks at him and says carefully: "You have never spent so much time alone with a woman before. She is your first female assistant. Are you sure this is love? Or is it because she is around you all the time. And all the care and attention you receive from her, you mistake that for love. If it was another girl in her place, would you have the same feelings for her?"

Bo Jinyan thinks about what she says.

Then he starts tapping his fingers on the armrest. He has a big smile on his face. His eyes look brightly at her.

"You have confirmed something for me. It's not about how many times you fall in love. Natural talent is an important factor." He says proudly: "Even with the amount of experience you have with guys, you can't see through a simple truth?"

Yin Ziqi: "...What do you mean?"

Bo Jinyan says slowly: "Your question is a paradox. Think about it, there are millions of woman in the world, yet I have always used a male assistant. But why did I change my habit and employ her instead?"

— — — — —

When Yin Ziqi and Fu Ziyu leave, it's the afternoon. Fu Ziyu leisurely chats to her while he drives: "Isn't it incredible? Bo Jinyan is in love. And they love each other so dearly. Every time I see the way he looks at Jian Yao, I think to myself - I must be dreaming."

Yin Ziqi looks out of the window: "Yes, I am so happy for him."

— — — — —

After his visitors 'reminded' Bo Jinyan how Jian Yao should look after him, he waits eagerly for night to arrive.

After dinner. Jian Yao sits in the balcony with him. She asks: "What do you want to do tonight? Watch TV? Read?"

Bo Jinyan looks at her and smiles: "Since I can't take a shower by myself, you need to wipe my body for me."

Jian Yao is speechless. She blushes.

Bo Jinyan adds: "Full body..."

Chapter 56

Many times, men and women have a different understanding for the same word.

For example. 'Full body' to Jian Yao means she will be wiping his face, neck, chest, back, arms and legs. And this is embarrassing enough.

But for Bo Jinyan...

Full body means EVERYWHERE, especially the part that is usually hidden beneath his underwear.

Jian Yao thinks to herself. Well, it is a reasonable request. It has been quite warm in the past few days. She suggests: "Let me put a chair in the shower box. You can sit there. I will hold and control the shower head and make sure no water touches the wound. Ok?"

Bo Jinyan smiles. His eyes are gleaming with joy.

"Of course. Good idea." He says in a low soft voice.

Something don't feel right. But man are usually excited by physical contact. She thinks no more of it and walks to the bathroom.

— — — —

The bathroom lights has a nice warm glow. Jian Yao puts a bar stool in the middle of the shower box.

Jian Yao helps Bo Jinyan to sit down.

She helps him to unbutton his shirt. He is sitting very still, just looking at her.

She takes his shirt off. Perhaps it's her imagination? The place seems to be filled with his unique masculine scent. She looks up. Bo Jinyan is still staring at her, smiling.

"What are you smiling about?" She asks.

"I am enjoying my shower."

Ok.... Jian Yao makes a mental note for herself. Do not speak to him during any form of physical contact. Anything he says is bound to make her embarrassed.

But it's not up to her to control whether Bo Jinyan decides to speak or not. After she takes off his trousers, and see his long and toned legs, she picks up the shower head with a reddened face. As she turns the water on, she hears him say: "What about my underwear?"

Jian Yao takes some time to think of a reply. The water lands next to his feet. Steam starts to fill the bathroom.

"It's not necessary." She says softly.

"Of course it is." He looks at her and says faintly: "I wash myself everyday."

Jian Yao's face is burning with embarrassment.

"I can teach you." He continues to say in a leisurely manner.

Jian Yao feels like the thread veins inside her face is about to explode.

"I don't need you to teach me." She starts to rinse his good arm. "I will do what I need to do. If you don't like it, you can do it yourself."

"Ok." Bo Jinyan says reluctantly.

She takes the handmade soap from the corner and starts to gently rub it on his arms. Then she hears him speaks again: "How are you intending to wash it off? I don't like the water temperature to be too high."

Jian Yao: "You... just shut up!"

Eventually, she finishes cleaning his back, his arms and his legs. She shoves him the shower head: "I will go out for a while. You can rinse the rest yourself."

Bo Jinyan looks in your eyes: "Sure, but you will need to help me to take off my underwear." He smiles: "I can't bend my back."

This is a very 'valid' reason.

He is sitting on the chair. He is tall, proportionate, with a great muscle definition. A perfect body. His face seems to be blushing too. He looks at her with anticipation.

Jian Yao tries her best to avoid touching his skin, but some contact is inevitable. She pretends nothing has happened when her fingertips accidentally touches his flesh. But her heart is pounding.

Seems like it took forever for her to complete the task. She quickly hands him the shower head and turns her back on him: "Call me when you are done." She walks out quickly. But she hears him call even before she reached the door: "Jian Yao."

"What?" She turns her head to the side, looking at him with her peripheral vision.

"Even if you pretend not to see it. You can't ignore the fact." He says in a slightly coarse voice, "I'm aroused...because of you."

— — — — —

Jian Yao waits in the lounge. She pressed her cold fingers to her hot cheeks and takes a deep breath. It's the first time she has seen a completely naked man in her life. The night in bed. It was too dark. Besides, she subconscious kept her eyes away from the lower half of his body.

The image is still vivid in her mind.

Suddenly she thinks of what's likely to happen between them in the not too distant future.... Oh, how embarrassing.

Bo Jinyan's voice from the bathroom: "I'm ready."

"Ok." She walks slowly back to the bathroom.

Oh great! She has to face him again.

— — — — —

Because of his restricted mobility, there are lots of things Bo Jinyan cannot do at the moment. The days become long and boring.

Bo Jinyan's temper is obvious. Except for Jian Yao, he grumbles and mocks about everything.

On the fifth night. Jian Yao is watching some US drama on her laptop. Bo Jinyan is sitting next to her. He can now put his hand around her.

After the nth time he criticises about the drama - actors are ugly, the plot has too many loop holes... Jian Yao can't stand it anymore. She looks at him: "Why are you so testy?"

He says faintly: "Because I hate recuperating."

"Your injuries were worse last time. It took you a whole year to recover. You got through that ok."

Bo Jinyan gives her a glance: "It's different."

"Why?"

"I didn't have you by my side to challenge my desires."

"...."

Then when night falls, he mood improves: "Time for a shower."

It's almost October. The weather has cooled down a bit. Jian Yao looks into the dark outside the window: "The temperature is dropping tonight. It's not that hot anymore. Is it necessary?"

He looks at her: "Are you trying to deprive me of my only pleasure in life at the moment?"

She pauses, then says: 'Very well. Let's go.'

When she settles Bo Jinyan on the chair in the shower box. She shoves him the shower head and smiles: "When you are done, go to bed. Goodnight."

Bo Jinyan looks at her. She has already walked out of the bathroom: "I saw you taking the files from the shelves with your hand today."

- So, Mr. Bo Jinyan. You are on your own.

Jian Yao returns to her room. Then she hears water splashing sounds from the bathroom. She smiles to herself.

But she forgets that everything has a consequence. She deprived him of his 'only pleasure', and there is a price she will need to pay too.

She is woken by in the middle of the night. She smells a familiar scent, then her body is lifted off the bed. She opens her eyes. It's Bo Jinyan. He is strong enough to carry her.

"What you are doing?" It's the middle of the night.

He replies with action. He carries her into his room, put her on his bed, then lies down beside her.

He just twirls her hair quietly. She thinks of all the possible things he might do. She blushes.

He has purposely left the bedside lamp on.

"Hug me." He says.

Jian Yao turns around and shuffle up close to him. She puts a hand in front of his chest. She likes this position. It's intimate, but not sensual.

And to her surprise. He is lying very still. Eyes closed.

He carried her over just so that they can sleep on the same bed. Nothing more.

After she falls asleep, Bo Jinyan opens his eyes.

Oh.... she was expecting something more from him.

But he is not fully recovered.

And he must be in his best form for his first 'time'.

— — — — —

The next morning, someone comes to see Bo Jinyan. Finally, he has got something to sink his teeth in.

Bo Jinyan's fame has spread to the rest of the country since the two serial killing cases. Today, an older officer from a second grade city from the South have come to seek his counsel.

He is about forty ears old. He looks tough and experience.

Although they are not expecting visitors, Jian Yao invites him to come in to take a seat on the sofa. Bo Jinyan is clearly not so welcoming: "When did my lounge become a reception area?"

Jian Yao looks apologetically to the officer. But he doesn't seem to mind. He takes out a stack of files and passes a few photos to Bo Jinyan: "Professor Bo, please have a look at the files."

The photo shows victims lying in their respective crime scenes. There are five photos all together. They look like they were killed by the same person. The murders happened about eighteen years ago. The method

the killer used had was the same for all the cases. There were also matching DNA from all the crime scene. But it's a cold case.

The old officer heard about how quickly Bo Jinyan managed to crack the recent homicides, so he thought he'd take a chance.

"A lot of the buildings where the crimes were committed have been demolished. The bodies are long buried," says the old officer. "I only have these photos and the witness statements. I have worked on this case for years. I am about to retire. I know there is only a very slim chance we can crack this now. But I want to give it a last try."

Jian Yao studies the information on the cases: 5 single ladies. Factory workers. Between the age of 20 - 25. All of them were quite pretty, and slim. Time of death was in the middle of the night, when they were asleep at home. No signs of sexual assault. But the bodies were abused after death. The cases were spread over a period of two years. According to the witnesses, all the ladies had a number of admirers in the factories."

Jian Yao frowns: "It's a very old case, and there's hardly any evidence. Bo Jinyan, what do you think?"

Bo Jinyan says to the officer: "I will give you a few suggestions:

- The killer was between 30 to 35 years of age when he killed those women.
- He worked for an organisation that provides services to the community: driver, courier services, electrician or plumber, or even police officer. He was working for or close the factories. At least, it will be in the same suburb.
- He was probably a stalker. But the victims and him might have met during some social functions. He might even tried to pursued them. He's had personal contact with the victims before killing them.
- He should be average looking. Not handsome, but not ugly either. Quiet. Quick tempered. Temperamental.

- He hated women. Though he didn't have sex with any of the women, I think there is still connection between sex and his crime. He lacked family attention from young, especially from his father.
- Lastly, a serial killer at this level lacks self control. There reason why there were no more cases must be because of change in his circumstances. Perhaps he was in jail for other crimes, or he was hospitalised or moved elsewhere, or he changed his killing style. If he is still alive, he will want to keep connected with his victims, for example, visiting their tombs or the crime scenes regularly, so he can re-live his memories. You mentioned some of the buildings are demolished. However, for a psychopath, he can only sees what's in his head. To him, those building still exist.

— — — — —

The officer left after talking to them. Is he going to find the killer after so many years? It's hard to say. But over the next few days, more officers from various provinces come to Bo Jinyan for assistance. Bo Jinyan does the same thing as he did for the old officer. He gives them his views on the cases and profiles the killer for them.

Sometimes Jian Yao is concerned that he is too tired out. "Are you sure you are not too tired?"

Bo Jinyan: "Does your body ever feel tired when your brain is doing all the work?"

Five days after the old officer came to him, he locked in a suspect: 52 years old man that runs a small store near the cemetery. He was an electrician. His parents separated when he was young. The police officer matched his DNA to the cases.

Jian Yao is overjoyed to hear the results. They try their best to help the ever increasing flow of visitors that seek his counsel.

So, time passes quickly when one is busy. It's now end of October. Bo Jinyan has been resting at home for almost two and a half weeks.

Chapter 57

A beautiful autumn day in B city. The air is brisk and clear.

In a bright sunny morning, Jian Yao stands in front of the coffee table. She is tidying the files. Bo Jinyan is sitting on the sofa behind her. He has his laptop on. He seems to be concentrating on reading something.

"Once the holiday starts, we have no more visitors." Jian Yao says casually.

She is talking about the officers visiting them with their cold cases. Yesterday, two people came. Today is the beginning of the seven day holiday. Not a soul has come to them.

Bo Jinyan lifts up his head from looking down at the screen: "Well, it is the National holidays."

Jian Yao laughs. Is this the same guy that she knew six months ago? She thought festivals and holidays mean nothing to him. She had to drag him out of the house to play fireworks with her.

Bo Jinyan knows what she is thinking about. He gives a sly smile. "I don't really care. But today is an important day for me."

Jian Yao is not sure what he means. But he lowers his head to work on his laptop again.

She is a little puzzled, but then it dawns on her -

Today is the nation's 'birthday', so it's his special day as well.

Wow! Didn't think he would love his home country this much!

After tidying the files, she goes to her room to get changed. She is meeting a few of her university friends today for shopping. Surely Bo Jinyan would not be interested.

"I'm leaving now." She yells at the front door.

"Umm." He replies "When are you coming back?"

Jian Yao answers: "I won't be long." She pauses, and adds: "I won't leave you to spend the first day of the holidays alone."

Bo Jinyan sits up straight on the sofa. He curls the lips on his handsome face: "Of course you won't." He says in a lazy but dreamy voice.

When you are in love, you start to miss the person the moment you part from him. Jian Yao sits in the taxi. The puffy white clouds hang high in the blue sky. She thinks of her charming boyfriend. Her heart is filled with joy.

Even when he was injured, he never hides the intention of wanting advance to the next level in their relationship with her. But in the past few days, they have been so busy that he seems to have forgotten.

Oh, he is so childish, yet so cute.

She is sure when he remembers... he will not hold back.

Oh, she'd better find a place to hide herself.

What Jian Yao doesn't realise is that he has never forgotten about it. It's always on his mind. He is waiting for his injuries to completely heal. He wants to be in top form to deliver the perfect first time experience for both of them.

The moment she walks out of the front door, Bo Jinyan puts down his laptop and starts to pace around the house.

Finally, their big day has arrived.

He's made all the necessary arrangements. She will be pleased.

He called the Police Department earlier to make sure no one will be appearing out of the blue with their unsolved cases. She might have noticed this already.

As for his injuries? He is completely recovered. In fact, he's been lying in bed for so long he feels he has lots of excess energy to burn.

Knowledge and skills? Those suggestions he just read on the internet is firmly planted in his brain. It is not an exaggeration to say that he is so knowledgeable in the area now that no matter which position or techniques she prefers, he can satisfy her.

She does not have her menstrual period today. In fact, according to the woman's normal cycle - today is one of her more productive days, which means she will be easily aroused.

Good. It's all set.

He walks to the window and taps the glass with his long fingers. He wants everything to be perfect. Is there anything he's forgotten?

He thinks for a while and gives Fu Ziyu a call.

Fu Ziyu is sitting with a cup of coffee in his balcony at home. He is enjoying the holiday too. He takes a sip and asks: "Master, what can I do for you today?"

Bo Jinyan says bluntly: "I am planning to have sex with Jian Yao tonight. For the first time. Do you have any tips for me?"

Fu Ziyu chokes again. "cough... cough..."

— — — — —

Jian Yao returns with a few shopping bags with her. To her surprise, the house is very quiet. His car keys are not there either.

It's the first day of the holiday. Everywhere is packed with people. It's very unusual that he would choose to go out on a day like this.

Then her phone rings. It's him.

"Are you home?" He asks. There's music in the background where he is. And his voice sounds low and a little muffled.

"Yes, I just got back." She is curious. "Where are you?"

"Wait." He turns to talk to someone else. After a while, he says to her: "You don't need to know where I am. Go and get ready, someone will come and pick you up soon."

Jian Yao is confused: "Pick me up? Why?"

Bo Jinyan laughs lightly: "To attend an important function with me."

She hangs up. An important function? Is it something to do with National Day celebrations with the department of Public Security?

No matter what it is, she is just glad to be with him.

But when she walks downstairs, she is shocked.

There is a long black limousine waiting for her. There are roses on both sides of the door handle. A driver in his black uniform walks towards her. He bows to her and opens the passenger seat doors.

The neighbours are attracted to this unusual sight. A lot of them are standing around, looking.

When she is in the car, she calls Bo Jinyan: "What is this all about? Why is a limousine here to pick me up?"

Bo Jinyan is silent on the other end.

"It goes without saying." He finally answers: "I am on a date with you."

Fu Ziyu's first tip.

"You intend to wait for her to come home, then carry her straight into the bedroom? Atmosphere, mate. The first time, atmosphere is very important. Give her a romantic date that she will never forget, then things will progress naturally from there."

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She is a little stunned.

Oh, so this is the important function. A date.

But it's quite true. They have not been on a proper date before.

"Sorry, I didn't realise." She smiles: "Thank you."

Bo Jinyan sounds pleased. He asks: "Is this romantic?"
Jian Yao can't help but laugh.

The limo with flowers is a little over the top, but it's the thoughts that count.

"Romantic. Thank you so much."

The long car stops in front of a five star hotel.

The lobby manager opens the door for Jian Yao: "Welcome, Miss Jian." He shows her to the elevator that will bring her straight to the top floor. "Mr. Bo is waiting for you."

Jian Yao smiles at him: "Thank you." She asks the manager: "What is he doing on the top floor?"

The manager smiles: "Mr.Bo has booked the penthouse on the top floor. It's got a 270 degrees view of the city lights. There is also a private swimming pool. I'm sure you will be satisfied with our facilities and services. We are the best hotel in town. Have a wonderful evening."

Jian Yao is dumbfounded. She finally understands why Bo Jinyan brought her here.

She thought their first date will be a romantic candlelight dinner in some nice restaurant... not in a luxurious penthouse.

This fellow.... is obviously running towards a goal.

She blushes as she walks out of the elevator.

A dazzling and elaborated designed crystal chandelier quickly attracts your attention as you step into the oversized lounge. There is a set of classic European designed leather sofa with a curved back rest. The window looks out to the city lights of B City.

She walks down the corridor lined with lush red carpet, to the next room. There is music coming out from the room. She hears footsteps too.

Jian Yao slowly walks over, and around golden screen.

It's a beautiful dining room that is dimly lit with mood lighting. There is a small round table in the middle of the room. On this dark brown table,

there is a long white candle in a candle stand, and a bunch of burgundy coloured moth orchid.

A young violinist is playing on the side, the soothing music is like the sound of gently flowing water.

Bo Jinyan is standing at the end of the corridor, in a well tailor shirt and trousers. His eyes sparkle under the flickering flame of the candle light, and his face has a gentle glow.

“Hi.” He says in his naturally low magnetic voice.

Jian Yao: “.....Hi.”

He walks towards her. He looks into her eyes and says admiringly: “You look beautiful tonight.”

Jian Yao thought they were attending a party tonight. So she chose a beautiful dress and put her hair up. She is wearing the diamond necklace that he gave her, revealing her soft neck and shoulders.

“Thank you.” she says softly. She can see his suggestive smile. She heart pounds. Because she is well aware of what he is thinking about right now. He is obviously pleased with the way she dressed.

Bo Jinyan takes her hand and they sit at the dining table.

Dinner is exquisite. Throughout the meal, Bo Jinyan is very quiet, but his smile never leaves him. And the look in his eyes says it all.

Soon, dinner is over.

The table is cleared, the violinist gone. Only the two of them are left in this big penthouse. They are still sitting at the dining table, staring at each other in candlelight.

Jian Yao picks up the bunch of moth orchids: "It's very pretty."

Bo Jinyan stands and walks behind her. He takes the flower away from her and throw it back onto the table.

"Leave the flowers here. Let's go to the bedroom."

Jian Yao's face reddens. She doesn't say a word. She does not even look up. But she allows Bo Jinyan to hold her hand and leads her to the bedroom.

He notices her nervousness, he says in his low deep voice: "Relax." he pauses slightly: "Even though I don't have experience, but my ability to learn and grasp new skills is superior. I am also very observant. I will do very well."

Jian Yao don't know what to say.

When they get inside, she is amazed.

There is another big chandelier in the room. This time, it is a modern artistic design with little square over it. A huge king size bed is in the middle of the room, surrounded by ceiling to ground glass windows that shows a panoramic view of B city.

So... they will be making love on this bed?

With the city underneath them? That's so bold and arrogant.

Well, it sure fits his style.

Her palms begin to sweat. What is going to happen next? Will he push her down onto the bed?

But Bo Jinyan leads her to one of the glass window. With one hand on the glass, one hand behind her head, he says to her: "Close your eyes."

Jian Yao: "...Why?" She is nervous.

He covers her eyes with his hand that was on the glass. He lowers his head and kisses her gently on her ear. Then he says to her: "I'll let you know when to open them."

Bo Jinyan continues to gently kiss her ears. Then he glides his lips down her neck, hover at the curve that is usually covered by her long hair. Jian Yao is shivering in his arms. Her eyes are covered by his hand, so she holds on his shirt.

"How long do I have to wait?" She says

"Not long." He says as he nibbles and gently bites the smooth flesh on her neck.

Jian Yao's first reaction is - a new trick. A few days ago, he only knows how to passionate but simply kiss her. But today, his touches are melting her, she is already breathing more quickly.

Her second thought - She knows what Bo Jinyan wants her to see. From the limousine, to the luxurious penthouse, and the exquisite dinner, she can almost guess that his next trick is to arrange for the hotel staff to write messages of love on helium balloons and float them up to appear before her.

Oh gosh, please do not write something like "Please make love to me, Jian Yao!"

As she is still thinking, suddenly he removes his hand. His lips are no longer on her neck. Jian Yao opens her eyes slowly, and see fireworks exploding in the most beautiful patterns, right before her eyes. The sky comes alive with so many vibrant hues, starbursts, and showers of light along with ribbons of smoke. And the colours reflect on the lake waters. It's breathlessly stunning.

Jian Yao is shocked - fireworks. He brought her to see fireworks. She did contemplate this possibility, but B City does not allow fireworks, except -

"Fireworks for the National Celebrations." He says proudly: "You are standing in the best spot for the city's firework display."

Jian Yao quietly watches the fireworks while Bo Jinyan quietly watches her. He is not interested in these shimmering lights and patterns at all. But he remembers why Fu Ziyu said.

"Take her to a romantic and beautiful setting."

Bo Jinyan thought for a while. He remembers how much she enjoyed the firework during the lantern festival. He tells Fu Ziyu his plans. Fu Ziyu approves: "Very good. No woman can resist fireworks. She will take the initiative to kiss you, then let things progress naturally from there on."

Humm.... he is waiting.... If she doesn't come over and kiss him in the next minute, then he will have to take the initiative instead.

"Thank you. Jinyan." She says gently.

"You are welcome." He smiles. "As long as you think it's romantic."

Because romance is the best catalyst.

Jian Yao smiles again. She does not watch the fireworks anymore. She takes a step forward and hooks her hands around his neck. Then she leans over to kiss him.

This kiss is different from her previous kisses. Her whole body snuggles up into his arms, as if she is going to entrust herself to him. She copies his kissing style - stirring him, inviting him for more...

Bo Jinyan has two other arrangements but he decides they are not necessary anymore. Lifting her up, he carries her across the room to the king size bed.

Jian Yao leans close to his chest. He gently places her on bed. The firework display is still going in the background. He leans down and looks at her. His face has the proud arrogant smile again.

He is ecstatic.

Jinyan. So am I. I am as happy as I am nervous...

"Take my clothes off for me." He says with his deep voice. His black eyes fixed on her.

Jian Yao blushes as she unbuttons his shirt. First button, second button... Then she feels a warm feeling on her thigh. He slides his hand in from underneath the dress, gradually exploring her body.

"Don't stop. Continue." He orders, "Unless you want me to keep my clothes on."

Jian Yao's attention was on his hand that's resting on her thigh. Her hands shakes as she continues to take off his shirt. He is pleased. He lies on top of her. Her hand gently rests on his chest as she tries to block him from coming closer.

But.... can he not stare at her like that. His gaze is sharp like razor. And the hand that is underneath the dress is getting more and more bold...

His long fingers start rubbing her, on top of the thin layer of fabric. He touches her with a strength that is not too hard, or soft, but just enough to make her body shivers. But of course, this is only the beginning. When he is aware of the slight dampness on the fabric, he smiles and says: "You are wet. Faster than I expected."

Jian Yao is almost driven mad. She hides her face in his chest and protests with a whine: "Can you please keep quiet?"

He looks at her. His smile increases.

"No." He says. "We should communicate our feelings. It helps to achieve perfect sex."

Then his fingers finally tilt the layer of fabric away to explore further. Jian Yao feels as if there are electric currents going through her. Every cell within her seems to be under his control. She can barely speak.

His thumb presses on her soft flesh. Jian Yao's legs become weak and shaky. His fingers dive in further. He frowns at this point. His hands' actions do not stop. He is obviously looking for something.

"Is it here?" He uses his fingertips to rub gently. Jian Yao takes a big breath. His frown turns into a smile: "Found it. I am so accurate."

Jian Yao's face is completely red from embarrassment. She grabs on to his shoulders. He notices her reactions, he is even more proud. He smiles: "Don't be so nervous. Just enjoy." He bends down to kiss her. His large body pressing on to hers, restricting her body movements. His hand continues to work its magic, and getting better at it as each second passes.

Knead, push, tease... Sometimes, it's a fast and strong rub. Sometimes, he's move in circles slowly and gently. His action is swift and smooth, not leaving her a chance to respite. She curls up like a cat under his body.

"Where... did you learn this?" She asks as she breathes heavily.

He looks up and smiles at her: "You mean this technique?"

Jian Yao's mutters a soft yes.

"A French book." He says " 'Best guide to sex.' You should read it too when you have time."

"No, I won't...." she struggles to finish her sentence as he picks up his speed again. The constant stimulation is making her anxious like ants on a hot pan. She feels a strong urge within her. A feeling like she can't get enough of. She has never felt like this all her life.

"Oh.... getting more and more excited?" His low voice is getting coarser too.

Jian Yao feels she can't continue anymore. Under his fingers, in a part deep within her, a trembling, strange sensation is going through her like layers of waves. Her heart is pounding so fast she feels it's going to explode any minute. But he continues to stir her...

This is not fair.... It's both their first attempt. Why does she feel so frustrated and nervous, and he is like an experienced lover, with all the confidence and skills to control the game right from the start.

But she has no strength left to complain. Then, a clear but sharp feeling, like a flash of white light/electric current, engulfs her.

"Oh..." She moans. She can't believe she made that noise. Her whole body trembles. She pushes him away: "Stop, stop. I can't take it anymore...."

Bo Jinyan looks at the woman who is shaking in his arms. According to the 'The Best Sex Guide', at this point, he needs to stay away from strong stimulations. He stops using his fingers, and gently presses the sides to help calm her down.

But his mind is not as calm as Jian Yao thinks.

Heat waves are rippling and stirring inside of him.

Too sexy. She is too sexy. Her toes curl when she reaches orgasm, softly pushing against his calves. Her skin turns to a pale pink at that point. This is not mentioned in the books.

He wants to access her right now, to have her tightly wrapping against him. Oh, it must be incredibly wonderful. He looks at that beautiful place, completely wet, looking soft and red under the lights.

His lower abdomen tightens. somewhere, there is a burning tension that feels like it wants to explode. Only the valley dripping with honey can appease and ease the tension.

No. Wait a little longer. There is something he wants her to do.

"Jian Yao, touch me." He lowers his head and latches on to her breasts, then grabs her hand. His heart is stirring - She is finally going to touch his private part.

Jian Yao body is still soft, her legs still numb. Her head is a little groggy. She looks up to see his bright black eyes looking into hers. His hand has led her to press on a hot and hard place.

Jian Yao's face is completely red again. She feels like she is going to suffocate soon.

But she can't back off now. She holds him in her hand, and under his gaze, and moves slowly.

Within a few seconds, Bo Jinyan feels his throat tightening. And it swells incredibly. She does not have the skills like he did. She pats it like a pet. But it's enough to set him on fire.

"You're great" he sighs.

Jian Yao continues to blush: "Really?" Looking at the thing in her hand, she can't help but comment: "It's nothing like your outer appearance."

His skin complexion looks more like smooth ivory.

Bo Jinyan understands what she means. It's a compliment from his woman to him. He can't wait another second. He removes her hands from there, and lowers his body to the right position.

Even though her tender flesh is sufficiently moist, the muscles are still tight. He lowers the head, it feels stuck. But this is enough to release a bit of the pressure. His mouth opens slightly, even his face has a tint of blush.

"Oh...." he lets out a sigh.

Jian Yao also whispers a gasp. It's hurting her.

Bo Jinyan holds her waist, and pushes in another segment. This is really painful. She complains: "It's painful." She gives him a disapproving glance, "I thought you read the book, so why does it still hurts?"

For once, Bo Jinyan don't feel like talking at all. He just wants to get it all in there. Oh... that warm wrapped up feeling. It's like drugs that are seducing him. He is completely unable to suppress the urge to thrust. He can even feel the tip hopping with joy.

But it hurts her though.

Bo Jinyan lets out a long breath. He stops the movement, and places his finger on her sensitive part.

"Relax." He is coaxing her: "It will be wonderful. I am skillful and my techniques are top class."

Jian Yao bursts into laughter.

But soon she is not laughing anymore. He caresses her with his fingers while advancing slowly at the same time. It's double stimulation. Her body starts to shiver again. Ok, he is a master... it's not as painful anymore.

When it's finally completely wrapped up, neither of them speaks. It's a strange and overwhelming feeling.

The two bodies wrapped in each other arms. The air is filled with their scent. Their heart beating like drums, awaiting for the most intimate moments.

"Now, do you feel it is real?" Bo Jinyan asks in her ears.

Jian Yao stares at him: "Ah."

A beautiful night. You are beside me. I am beside you. You are in me, and I am in you. You, who are usually proud and arrogant, would love me so passionately. You excite me in ways I have never experienced before. I am crazy about you. We will be the most intimate person for each other from now on. We will be inseparable.

I wish this moment is a covenant of a lifetime. We will be by each other's side for the rest of our life. Until we are old and frail, we will still be deeply in love with one another, till death do us part.

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Chapter 58

The sun's rays are streaming in from three directions. The whole room has a luminous glow.

In the center of the messed up bed, Jian Yao and Bo Jinyan are lying there

Words alone cannot express how he feels. Every drop of her sweat, every bead of her sweet nectar and every inch of her delicate skin is under his mastery, dancing with him.

A delicate beauty, bowing for her lover. This primal act of sharing love between men and women is too wonderful. Everything described in the books about sex is just a monotonous explanation. What a joke. Bo Jinyan thinks to himself. It should be rewritten as 'Words cannot express this. It is recommended that you experience it for yourself to understand the immense pleasure it brings.'

She buries her heavy breathing under the sheets. Her small and soft waist swings according to the rhythm he sets. Her flushed cheeks, her supple breasts, and the trembling legs that wrap around his waist... she is so weak, so attractive. Every entry, the feeling being tightly wrapped by her warmth... It's ecstasy.

His broad hand caresses and explores her curves. His advances are in his usual style: fast, precise and powerful, but tasteful and refined at the same time - And he repeatedly whispers softly in her ears with his low magnetic voice, to seduce her even more...

"Oh.... looks like you enjoy the 'nine shallow one deep' thrusting pattern."

"Don't bite your lips. Your moaning brings me pleasure."

"You are so wet.... baby, this time will be even better than the last."

Bo Jinyan is known for his forthright mannerisms. But to speak such brazen words without a hint of embarrassment? Jian Yao wishes he could just be quiet, but she is melting in his arms, she is too weak to protest. So she continues to allow him to stimulate her senses, both physical and verbally. Her whole body is immersed in the pleasure he brings her. Everything around her seems blur out of focus, except for his forceful thrusts, reminding her of his presence.

Then, the moment arrives. He pushes in deeply and wraps his arms tightly around her waist. Her entire bodyweight falling on her. His body is still, except for that one spot, which is quivers in the same rapid rhythm as the soft flesh it's resting in. She opens and closes her palm that is on his chest, not letting go of his lean toned muscles. The sweat on his forehead drips on her face. His handsome face finally relaxes. A smile appears upon his lips.

"....." He lets out a long breath, and rolls off her. They lie side by side on the big bed.

Both of them are staring at the ceiling, recovering their breath. Jian Yao pulls the scrunched up duvet to cover herself. He too, grabs the other corner and pulls it up over his body.

After a while, he pulls her into his arms. She can feel that his desires are not completely faded. He looks at her with his bright black eyes.

“How did it feel this time?” He takes a quick glance at the classic pendulum clock at the corner of the room: “One hour thirty four minutes. If you still think it’s too short, it can be extended the next round.”

He purposely emphasises on the length of time. Jian Yao is both embarrassed and amused. She lifts her finger to lightly scratch his chest: “You don’t have to feel bad about what happened the first time. You are inexperience...”

Both of them remember what happened last night. Not long after he entered into her, pushing in and out around a dozen times or so, she gradually adjusted to the motion and the pain lessened. She whispers in a voice so soft that it’s almost inaudible: ‘Umm.. feels alright now... it’s actually quite nice.’ Perhaps he was overstimulated by his lover’s encouraging words, his face suddenly tightens. And for the first time in his life, his eyes reveals emotions of intolerance, defeat and awkwardness. He quickly backs out...

Of course Bo Jinyan is well aware of the fact that the first time don’t last long for most men. But he was so sure that he was different from other ordinary men. That he is special and ‘gifted’ and will be able to have great control over himself, even for his first time.

So, after what had happened, even though he was able to lengthen the time considerably for all subsequent acts, his first defeat left him rather dissatisfied. The first thing he did after waking up this morning was to score another round. So he could increase his average time length (including their first time) to more than 60 minutes, and also to show Jian Yao that he is more capable than she thinks.

He feels better with this average.

"I am sorry. Looks a little swollen." He looks down and says: "But don't worry, I bought some ointment for you. It's at home. I'm sure the swelling will subside in no time." Then he starts to visualise in his mind how she looks when 'the swell subsides', he smiles approvingly.

Jian Yao blushes uncontrollably again. She gently hits him: "Why do you have ...this type of medicine at home?"

Bo Jinyan sweeps her a proud smile: "Making love is an important milestone for our relationship. Do you think I will miss out any detail?"

Jian Yao thinks for a while, then she smiles: "Yes, very well prepared. Except for the first time which ended with lightning speed."

This is obviously asking for trouble. Bo Jinyan frowns and looks at her for a few seconds. She starts to get uneasy. She quickly turns to get out of bed: "I'm taking a shower..."

But he slides his arm around her waist and scooped her up before she has a chance to escape. His body once again covers her. His breath surrounding her: "Looks like the average is still short..."

The probing and grinding starts again. "Ah!" She screams: "I'm sorry.... It's my fault..... I've had enough...."

.....

After a passionate and strenuous morning, they doze off again. When they wake up again, it's mid-afternoon. The room is filled with the afternoon sun. Jian Yao is still in bed. It seems like all the strength in her body has drained out of her.

She hears the sound of water in the bathroom. Bo Jinyan is having a shower. She hides under the duvet. She thinks about what has

happened. She has given herself completely to him. A feeling of wondrous sweetness fills her heart.

Bo Jinyan's mobile phone rings. Her thoughts are interrupted by the incoming call. She looks at the screen, it's Fu Ziyu. She yells out to Bo Jinyan: "It's Ziyu." She presses the answer button and says to Fu Ziyu: "Ziyu, he won't be long."

Fu Ziyu says with laugh in his voice: "Oh, no hurry at all. I hope I am not interrupting you guys."

Jian Yao's face burns in embarrassment. He knows!

Bo Jinyan walks out from the bathroom, she quickly passes him the phone.

Bo Jinyan's hair is still wet. Water is dripping down onto his shoulders and back. He has a towel wrapped around his waist, showing off his lean toned body.

Jian Yao is watching him from the bed. Oh... from now on, this will be a frequent and normal sight...

"What's up?" Bo Jinyan smiles as he answers the phone.

Fu Ziyu is concerned about his good friend. He was afraid last night may have been a set-back for Mr.Bo because of his inexperience. But it seems his concern was unnecessary. His friend sounds like he had a fantastic night.

Wow... Ms Jian Yao, must have been a tiring night for you. A 26 years old virgin...

So he says to Bo Jinyan: "Oh, nothing much. I just called to congratulate you." Then he asks: "How was it?"

Bo Jinyan has a deep smile: "Thank you. It was great."

Jian Yao is able to guess what they are talking about. She throws a pillow at Bo Jinyan: "I don't want you to talk about it."

Bo Jinyan turns to smiles at her: "Ok." Then he tells Fu Ziyu: "She is shy, I can't talk about it anymore. But you can imagine how awesome it was. Thanks for your useful advice."

Jian Yao: "....."

After he puts down the phone, he sees her getting out of bed, wearing her pyjamas. She is going to take a shower. He looks at her lovely curves and her full firm bosom. It's enough to make him feel hot again.

Oh... she belongs to him. This is an amazing feeling.

Jian Yao turns around and sees him staring at her.

"What is it?"

Bo Jinyan pauses to think of something to say to her. He wants to convey his love for her in one concise statement.

"If I knew how much pleasure it would bring me when we are one physically and spiritually, I would have asked for your love on the first day we met."

I have wasted so much time already. I should have held your hands long ago, to share this happiness.

Jian Yao feels like a jar of honey has spilled into her heart, the sweetness flowing through to all the other parts of her body.

Seeking her love on day one? That does fits his vain and brazen personality.

But...

"Thank you. I am feeling very happy too." She replies softly.

I am happy to be with you. Even though your statement had no logic in it, but it's the first time I have heard a statement from you that is illogical. And it's because of me.

Because you love me, and I love you very much too.

— — — — —

The National holiday flashes past. Some people had a passionate and sweet week. Some had a tiring but meaningful week. But some passed it in despair and pain.

7th October. The last night of the holidays. In a city in Southern provinces. A dark and quiet factory warehouse.

A middle aged man. He is stumbling as he walks. He is holding a can of petrol, pouring it over a row of petroleum gas tanks.

"I beg you.... please, let me go..." He wails like a trapped animal. A man that appears to be strong on the outside has tears over all his face: "My parents are very old. I have family. My wife and children are waiting for me. Please don't kill me.... why me..."

A deep voice speaks out in the darkness: "I chose you because I like the looks of you."

The man knows there is no way out of this. His hand shakes as he takes out the lighter and turns it on. A flickering flame dances in the night.

“You will let my family go?” He asks trembling “If I light the fire, you will dismantle the bomb in my house?”

“Of course.” says the other man: “And I promise they will not suspect a thing... except that you have such a hatred for this society that you are committing suicide with arson.”

The man takes his last deep breath. He closes his eyes, lets out an agonising yell. He drops the lighter on the ground, onto the slippery and pungent petrol next to his feet....

As flames engulf him, he seems to hear the other man saying: “This is for my good friend. To die for him is an honour.”

Then, there are sounds of big explosions, and he is swallowed in the waves of heat and force. His world is silenced.

— — — — —

8th October. Morning.

A Grand Cherokee arrives at the Central Police Station. Jian Yao gets out of the car. Bo Jinyan is in his black suit. They are walking side by side.

“I have to file a complaint about last night.” Bo Jinyan says to her.

Jian Yao pauses her step. Bo Jinyan continues with his ‘complaint’:
“Why do you refuse to try out the new positions? You know how inquisitive I am. You can’t stop me from exploring and improving in this area.”

Jian Yao: “Please, just shut up.”

Bo Jinyan is not finished yet: “If I am one of the smartest people in the world, naturally I will also be one of the best in this area too.”

Jian Yao starts to blush. A group of officers are coming towards them. She quickly says in a low voice: "Can we discuss this when we get home?"

Bo Jinyan takes a look at the guys coming towards them. They have just finished their fitness routine in the morning. All of them are wearing T Shirts or singlets. Their muscles have the pump look after workout. And they greet Bo Jinyan and Jian Yao as they walk past: "Good morning, Professor Bo. Good morning, Jian Yao."

Jian Yao smiles at them. A few of them stops to chat to Jian Yao. Bo Jinyan stands quietly. After they leave, he mutters to himself: "A bunch of raging hormones that are not getting the satisfaction they want."

Jian Yao bursts out laughing...

It's only been a week since he is 'getting the satisfaction'. Does he have to be so proud of it?

Work after the long holiday is no different from usual. He still gets lost in this work and forgets about her until the 'bell' rings for lunch. Then he walks over, gives her a long passionate kiss and whispers in her ears: "We'll continue tonight..."

He receives a call from Yin Ziqi in the afternoon.

Because he is in a good mood. His tone is unusually pleasant: "What is it? My lovely but troublesome sister?"

Yin Ziqi is inviting Bo Jinyan to go to America next month. To spend Christmas with the rest of the family.

"Your father is not feeling so well lately." She says: "You should visit him."

Bo Jinyan thinks about it: "Ok. I will bring Jian Yao to see him. Can you arrange the air ticket for us?"

Yin Ziqi hesitates on the other end: "Are you sure you want to bring your girlfriend along? I know Uncle Bo well. He wants you to have a wife from the same social circle. I agree it's too old fashioned but he is not well at the moment, are you sure you want to do that?"

Bo Jinyan gives a faint laugh: "That's his problem, not mine. From the moment I chose my field in university, he's always used his health as an excuse. But he is never successful. I am surprised you even brought this up."

Yin Ziqi: ".....alright." She hangs up. Then she calls her fiancé: "Hi. Where are we going for dinner tonight?"

— — — — —

After Bo Jinyan hangs up, he looks at Jian Yao.

Jian Yao is looking at him too: "You want to bring me back to the US?"

"We can spend Christmas together. Just the two of us." He says calmly.

Perhaps it's the way he speaks, Jian Yao automatically thinks about what they usually do when there's 'only the two of them'.

She is about to tell him off when he continues: "If you are willing, I want to bring you to a few places. I think you will enjoy visiting the places I like."

Jian Yao answers gladly: "Yes, I'd love to."

He wants to share his likes and interests with her. He inadvertently makes her feel loved and treasured.

Bo Jinyan is pleased with her answer.

They continue with their work. No one speaks anymore. But the air in the office seems to be filled with a scent of happiness and contentment.

Someone knocks on the door. They both look up. The Team Leader is holding some files, walking in with a sober look on his face.

“Professor, there is an unusual case. I would like to have your opinion on it.”

Bo Jinyan has his usual faint smile: “Sure.”

The Team Leader continues: “In the last seven days, there have been five arson cases in five different cities. All the arsonists died on scene, and they left suicide notes. When we link the cases together, we found the following:

- 1.The brand of petrol used is the same
2. The brand for the lighter used to start the fire is also the same
3. We found detonation device in three of the five crime scenes. All of them are configured in exactly the same way.

Bo Jinyan stands up and takes the files. He looks through them and mumbles: “This is an Interesting case indeed....”

(Note from Author Ding Mo: He is coming. He is really coming. Everyone, close your eyes ~)

An ‘interview’ between the author Ding Mo and Bo Jinyan (Warning: contains X-rated discussions)

Author : Hi everyone. Happy Mid Autumn Festival! We are honoured to have Mr.Bo Jinyan here today to answer some of your questions. Due to his busy schedule (he has made arrangements for later tonight, I am sure you’ll understand), he will only be with us for a few minutes...

Bo Jinyan: You have already wasted 5 seconds.

Author: Question 1. How many times did you do it last night? Please note these questions are from the QQ forum readers. It has nothing to do with me.

Bo Jinyan: Four, not counting the first one.

Author: Why are you not counting the first one?

Bo Jinyan: You can shut up now. Next question.

Author: How did you feel? What frequent do you anticipate you will be engaging this physical exercise in the future?

Bo Jinyan: (Smile) This is a good question. It think it was perfect. As for frequency. It depends. But once a day will be the minimum.

Author: Do you ever find Jian Yao not attractive?

Bo Jinyan: Hormones flood your brain and body when you fall in love. Therefore, in my eyes, she is always attractive. The person who asked this question clearly lacks knowledge in the area. I suggest they should read more on how to relate with the opposite sex.

Author:Hmmm... first time.... how long did it last?

Bo Jinyan: (looks coldly at screen) Are you trying to provoke me?

Author: .. next question.... how did the first time feel?

Bo Jinyan: To be honest, I don't mind leaving my role as the male lead of this novel right now...

Author: I am sorry. I promised I'll leave it alone. Next. Do you want children?

Bo Jinyan: No, I am not interested to have kids.

Author: Ok. But it's not entirely your decision....

Bo Jinyan: What did you say?

Author: Nothing... Next. Was Jian Yao too weak to stand up the next day?

Bo Jinyan: (finally with a smile back on his face) Yes. But she refuses to admit it.

Author: Contraceptive methods?

Bo Jinyan: We tried condoms and the pull out method. I don't like either. But for now, we will settle for the latter.

Author: You are so blunt.... how many kids... O sorry, that's a repeat.

Bo Jinyan: Zero. Next.

Author: Are you afraid of dying?

Bo Jinyan: Nonsense. Of course not. But with my IQ, I am confident of keeping myself alive until a ripe old age.

Author: What sort of logic is that? But alright.... next. How do you see Yin Ziqi?

Bo Jinyan: She is a family member that I am not very close to.

Author: Yin Ziqi, I hope you are not too disappointed. Next. Jian Yao has a lot of secret admirers. How do you deal with them?

Bo Jinyan: Why do I have to deal with them. They have the word stupidity written all over them.

Author: Oh... that's in my book intro. Anyway, which part of Jian Yao do you like?

Bo Jinyan: (Smiles again) eyes.

Author: Today is Mid Autumn Festival. What type of mooncake do you like?

Bo Jinyan: French style cherry filling. That is Jian Yao's favourite too.

Author: Last question. When you guys were what did you say to her?

Bo Jinyan: Even though your question is incomplete. I understand what you mean. I admit, when I reaches orgasm, there are moments where my mind goes blank. But as you know, I do recover very quickly, then, a lot of phrases comes to mind.

Author: For example?

Bo Jinyan: Like.... So great. Unbelievable, I am fxxking her, and I love her very much.

Author: I want to laugh, but I am so touched at the same time... Last question. Is there anything you would like to say to the readers on Mid Autumn Festival?

Bo Jinyan: (pauses): Nothing.

Author: ...You! If you don't wish them a Happy Mid Autumn, you can forget about sex for the rest of the story.

Bo Jinyan: (reluctantly) Ok. Happy Mid Autumn. Wish you have a happy time with your family. Goodbye.

Chapter 59

Why would someone commit arson?"

"Because when they see the flames engulfing everything, they think they are in control. In the beginning, it's controlling the fire, then he will want to control life, and start to murder people."

Inside the burnt out factory, Bo Jinyan is standing with his hands at his back. He looks at the ashes all over the floor. Jian Yao stands behind him. She is examining every corner.

All five cases happened in different cities. They are closed cases. This is why they are keeping their investigation confidential.

A police officer standing behind them explains: "The first three cases happened in empty parks in the middle of the night or in residential houses. Except for the arsonist, there were no other victims. However, from the fourth case onwards, innocent people were killed. Especially this last case, three workers died in the blast."

"So...." Bo Jinyan turns to look at him: "You only noticed the similarities after the fifth case."

The officer nods.

Bo Jinyan has a sarcastic smile on his face: "I don't buy the 'five cases are similar' lie. It's obvious that the person who is behind all these cases changed his strategy after the third case. There are two reasons for this:

1. He is getting greedy. 2. He wants more attention. I think his next step is to cause a big explosion involving public transport."

The officer is shocked. He asks: "But how does he control the arsonists?"

"That's the answer we are looking for." Bo Jinyan says slowly.

He takes off his gloves and turns to Jian Yao: "Let's go."

Jian Yao catches up behind him: "We've been to all the scenes. Any discoveries?"

"No. There's nothing out of the ordinary. All the necessary forensic work had been done by the police."

They step out of the factory. There are police cars everywhere.

Bo Jinyan pauses his steps and smiles at her: "Tell me, what should we doing next?"

Jian Yao thinks for a while: "Since there's no clue at the scenes. I think we should look at the suicide notes."

Bo Jinyan turns around and continues to walk forward. He says with a flat voice as he is walking: "Good, looks like our frequent and passionate sex is not affecting your work. You are as smart and efficient as usual. Good. Keep it up."

Jian Yao: "....."

This guy is like a changed man when he is working. But...what a way of making sure their private life is not affecting their work.

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The local police station.

Jian Yao and Bo Jinyan is sitting in their conference room. The five suicide notes are on the table, as well as copies of other suicide notes.

It didn't take Bo Jinyan very long to read through them. He leans back on to the chair.

Jian Yao carefully reads through every sentence. She gets more and more suspicious as she reads on.

"These suicide notes... something is wrong." She looks at Bo Jinyan.

He gives a cold smile: 'Yes, they are very well written.'

Jian Yao understands what he means. He doesn't mean they are very 'well written' that one can easily tell it's fake. It's well written because they very believable!

Firstly, the handwriting. The strokes flowed smoothly. They were not forced at all. Some writers were getting emotional and their handwritings were a little harder to read. The style of writing was very colloquial. It's filled with frustration and anger. Each letter expressed they were disappointed and hopeless with life, and so they decided to end it with arson. Every letter was reasonably lengthy. None of the letters deliberately avoided anything, and each one written in a different personal style.

It ticks all the boxes for evaluating if a suicide note is genuine or not. Based on what Bo Jinyan taught Jian Yao in the Wang Wan Wei case, it does seem like these suicide notes are not written under duress. This is probably why none of the police officers were suspicious earlier.

But the question remains. If there is someone else behind the arsons, how did he manage to get them to write suicide notes willingly, and to commit arson after that?

"Humm...look at your confused little face." He says in his low voice. He is looking at her with a smile.

How can he always be so confident?

"I am thinking." Jian Yao snaps back. "Tell me. What do you think?"

Bo Jinyan stands up. Today, he is wearing a dark grey suit. He walks to the white board in front of the conference room. He picks up a marker. With both hands at his back, he looks at her: "Give me Conan Doyle's quote on finding answers. It's old fashioned but it's practical and useful."

Jian Yao answers: "Eliminate the factors that are not possible, whatever is left behind, no matter how bizarre it seems, is the truth."

Bo Jinyan: "So, what are you so puzzled about. Just analyse the situation one step at a time. Ok?"

Jian Yao: "...ok ok! Just tell me." Even though they are lovers, he always disparages her, by either criticising she is not smart enough, or not proficient enough at her work.... But that's ok. she will ignore his immaturity and arrogance.

Bo Jinyan starts slowly: "I repeat what I said previously, that there must be someone behind all these cases."

The reason is simple: Even though all five arsonists have a motive, the probability of them choosing to commit their crime in the same style, and all within a few days is very low. And the sequence of cases clearly indicates the evolution of a psychopath."

"Yes," Jian Yao says, "The possibility of that is very very low indeed."

“There is a second probability.” says Bo Jinyan: “When they were writing their suicide note, his mind controlled them to write in a style he wanted. The common methods including drugs, hypnosis, persuasion etc etc to create hallucination, and/or to influence their emotions. In that way, he is able to obtain the ‘genuine’ suicide notes.”

Jian Yao is shocked.

Mind control? These are things she has only read in a text book.

Perhaps it’s because he notices her hesitation, he says: “Are you confused again? Mind control is a real method that people uses. It’s not just a theory. But it’s not as dramatic as Hollywood portrays it to be.” Then his smile disappears from his face. He looks pensive.

Jian Yao asks: “What is it?”

Bo Jinyan gives a dry laugh: “I just remembered. Tommy tried it on me too...”

Tommy, serving his life sentence in a high security prison in California US.

Bo Jinyan has not shared with Jian Yao about his experience. The dark cellar, his wounds, and what he just mentioned, the mind control techniques.

“Then... what happened in the end?” She asks softly.

Bo Jinyan glances at her: “In the end? I sent him to prison. Have you lost your memory?”

Jian Yao smiles at the aloof look on his face.

Yes, Bo Jinyan always wins in the end.

“Ok, Ok, Ok. My mistake. Let’s get back to the case.”

Bo Jinyan continues: “I lean towards the theory that he used mind control. Being burnt to death is a very painful way to die. To find five determine men that wants to use this painful method to take revenge on society is not an easy task. For example.... if I give you a choice... Choose between death by burning yourself or taking poison, which one would you choose?”

Jian Yao: “.... poison.”

Bo Jinyan nods: “That’s my point.”

“Next question. What do the five arsonists have in common?”

Jian Yao had some time to think over this before: “

1. Age. They are in between 35 to 45 years old.
2. Financial status. All of them struggle to make ends meet.
3. According to their family and friends. They are reserved and quiet. They don’t like to communicate. These people often build up resentment towards society. They tend to be more negative.
4. Prior criminal record. Whether it’s theft, or assault, all of them had been charged for minor offences before. But the charges are not serious so none of them have spent time in prison.”

When she finishes, she quietly looks at Bo Jinyan. He has an approving smile on his face.

“That’s correct.” And he adds slowly: “A good arsonist’s criminal profile.”

Jian Yao says: “You mean...”

Bo Jinyan nods: “He” knows how to profile his victims. This verifies my previous theory. That he is very good at mind control techniques.”

Jian Yao is quiet. An intelligent criminal that is also an expert on criminal psychology. He's challenging the police by a series of brutal arson cases...

She asks softly: "Is "He" the Flower Cannibal No.2?"

Since Jiang Hao's death, and the absences of 'messages' after the two homicide cases, Jian Yao was almost certain "He" is dead.

But when Bo Jinyan mentioned about Tommy, a sense of foreboding filled her.

Bo Jinyan has long contemplated this possibility. He has a sarcastic smile on his face: "Well, if it is 'Him', that would be interesting." Then he swipes her a glance: "Don't have to be nervous. I'm here."

Jian Yao thinks about it. Yes, he is no match for Bo Jinyan. She should not be worried about it.

I only arrest the most hideous criminals. He said before. And he is never wrong.

— — — — —

After lunch.

Bo Jinyan and Jian Yao are sitting in one of the most famous restaurants in town.

The setting is lovely. It's located at the water's edge. Bo Jinyan loosens his tie. He is relaxing on a sofa, with his arms wrapped around his woman.

Jian Yao is used to his investigation style by now. The initial stage of criminal analysis is done. It's time for the police and forensic staff to

take over. It's their job to find the person behind the cases and work out how he connected with each of the arsonists.

Even though it's their lunch break, Jian Yao is not as relaxed as Bo Jinyan. She is busy reading the information on the case.

Bo Jinyan suddenly says to her: "You did a great job with the arsonist profiling today. It's definitely an improvement on the previous cases." Jian Yao looks up and gives him a sweet smile. It's not easy to get a compliment from him.

Bo Jinyan smiles and continues: "Perhaps my previous judgment on you is not accurate enough."

Jian Yao is curious: "What do you mean?"

Bo Jinyan answers slowly: "The British believes the right amount of sex will make people more healthy, enhances one's ability to think, and have quicker reaction times. You just proved the theory right. Interesting."

He is not trying to be cheeky. He speaks it as a matter of fact.

But Jian Yao finds it embarrassing to be chatting about these things. She blushes.

Then he says faintly: "Are you not going to thank me?"

"Oh... just stop it, will you!!"

News came on their way back to the police station.

The officer calls: "Professor Bo, we have made an important discovery."

Chapter 60

Historically, there are a lot of cunning and cruel criminals that managed to escape the raid, yet exposed their identity under the least expected circumstances. For example, Ted Bundy, the American serial killer was arrested after he failed to pull over for a routine traffic stop. In China, Yang Xinhai was stopped by police check points in an entertainment venue.

Now, in front of Bo Jinyan and Jian Yao is a valuable clue that's obtained in a similar fashion.

After lunch. A quiet conference room.

A few technicians from the Ministry of Public Security are analysing data they collected from the arsonists' house. One of the senior technicians explains: "Three of the five arsonists had computers at home. We noticed that all of them have been hacked a few days before the fires. All the data inside were wiped off by a virus sent by the hacker. Not only were the computers, but the servers in the areas were attacked too."

Bo Jinyan stands behind them. His long fingers taps the desk: "So, the internet cafes that are close to the two other arsonists' houses were hacked too?" He says coldly: "Internet. This is the quickest way to source his victims."

Jian Yao says: "They are born all in the 70s. People from this generation are usually technically proficient." She turns to Bo Jinyan: "We should add this to the profile: frequent users of the internet chat rooms and discussion forums. It's common for these middle aged men, who are not successful in their careers, to spend a lot of time online."

“You are right.” The senior technician is impressed with her analysis: “And we have a bonus. The data in one of the computers was not completely wiped off.”

The last arsonist, who is also the oldest of the five arsonists, is in better financial shape compared with the others. The old computer he normally used was at the repair shop. What the hacker wiped was his son’s laptop.

‘We traced the data back to an online discussion forum. According to the company that runs the forum, their server was hacked around the same period as well. But their firewall managed to block the hacker. So we managed to retrieve the information that belonged to all five arsonists. The results show that all of them had frequent contact with a particular ID account.” The senior technician turned to a young man: “Anam, please show Professor Bo.”

Anam looks like he is in his early twenties. He wears a pair of glasses with a thin golden frame. He turns the monitors towards them: “The name of the ID account is Ching Tian Gu Chi* It uses an overseas proxy login, with a number of firewalls around it. We are currently using a few different algorithms to crack his location.

(* literal translation: the solitary notes/accounts of the clear sky)

This is not a speciality of Bo Jinyan, he takes a look at Anam: “How long till we get the results?

Anam: “Approximately three minutes.”

Bo Jinyan has a satisfied smile on his face. He pulls a chair over to sit next to Anam. The others take a seat too. Everyone is waiting anxiously.

“Ching Tian Gu Chi...” Bo Jinyan mocks: “What a narcissistic name.”

Suddenly, all three computers flashes and turns into a blue screen! Rows of data fills the screen, then there is an error message. The original program is nowhere to be seen anymore.

“What happened?” asks the senior technician.

Anam frowns and looks at the machine. They try typing on the keyboards but the computers are not responding.

Bo Jinyan says coldly: “Are we..... being attacked instead?” Jian Yao’s heart tightens. She taps his shoulder to remind him not to be too harsh to Anam.

The senior technician says to Anam: “Deal with this immediately. If we lose this clue, we will be at a dead end.”

Anam, who has been silent since the computer started to play up, speaks calmly: “His safety system uses the best technology he can get his hands on in the US.”

Everyone starts to worry, but then he continues faintly: “But it’s not the best in the world.” Then his fingers start typing on the keyboard at a quick speed.

In a few seconds, his screen flashes again, and rows of calculations re-appear on screen.

The technicians are relieved. Jian Yao and Bo Jinyan looks at Anam. His hand is on the mouse. They hear around 10 clicks, then another set of numbers appear on screen. He turns to look at Bo Jinyan. His glasses reflect the lights from the computer screens: “I’ve got his address - didn’t take more than 3 minutes.”

Everyone is surprised. The senior technician taps Anam’s shoulders. He passes the information to the officers waiting outside.

Bo Jinyan stands up. He takes a glance at Anam: "The security system for the discussion forum. Is it designed by you?"

Anam has no expressions on his face. He closes his laptop screen: "A small job I took on while studying in university."

Bo Jinyan doesn't say anything more. He walks out of the conference room. Jian Yao looks at him. Then she looks at the young man, Anam. Then she walks out after Bo Jinyan.

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Half an hour later. On a plane.

The address Anam identified is a villa in a seaside city. The special team in charge of this case is taking the first available flight there. They have informed the local police to work with them.

The plane is travelling through a clear blue sky. Bo Jinyan has his sleep mask on. He adjusts his seat so that he can lean back more comfortably. His handsome face glowing from the rays coming through the cabin window. He is holding Jian Yao's hand. His thumb gently rubbing the back of her hands.

Even in the midst of stressfulness and hard times, love brings a sense of peace to the situation. When he is by your side, your heart is settled. Even if you are in a dangerous place, you feel that together, you can face it with ease.

"Anam is a genius too." Jian Yao says softly.

When they were in the conference room. It was like watching two masters at work. Jian Yao is glad to have another genius working with them in the team.

Bo Jinyan faintly repeats an important word: "Too?"

Jian Yao laughs: "Yes. Like you."

Bo Jinyan looks disdainfully at Jian Yao: "Criminal psychology is an art. Mathematical calculation is a skill. How can you compare the two?"

Jian Yao: "....."

Man, can this man be more arrogant?

Then he says again: "Of course, he is one of the best amongst his field. He should be very pleased to be working with me."

Jian Yao asks: "Why is that?"

"Because I can help him maximise his value and live to his full potential." He says: "Why shouldn't he be happy?"

Jian Yao: "....."

There are a lot of empty seats in the plane cabin. Some of the others within the special team comes over to discuss the cases with Bo Jinyan.

Jian Yao looks at Anam. He is sitting quietly by himself in a window seat a few rows behind them. He is reading something on his mobile phone. Looks like he has no intention of joining the discussion.

Mmmm... so is this what happens when two geniuses meet? They simply ignore each other?

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The private beach looks lovely in the setting sun. A golden sheen covers the sand. A cool sea breeze is blowing.

Several police cars are driving along the coastal highway. From afar, one can see a black and white villa. It has a contemporary design, at the water's edge. There are a few police car in front of the property - the local police who arrived ahead of them.

"It's a new dwelling. There's no registered owner yet." says one of the officers. "But to be able to build a villa like this, the person must be very rich."

When Bo Jinyan's police car arrives the car parking area of the villa, they see a person they don't expect to see.

Yin Ziqi.

She is wearing a causal pair of cream colour track pants. Her hair is tied up to a poly tail. There are few people standing behind her. They don't look pleased either. Jian Yao recognises them. They are her assistant, secretary and two bodyguards.

"Welcome to K city. Let's keep this brief." One of the local police is addressing the special team: "The owner of this villa is Lin Yi Yang, the deputy general manager of Feng Kai Group. The lady over there is Ms. Yin Ziqi. She is his fiancée. When we arrived, she is already at the villa."

Jian Yao is shocked. Bo Jinyan walks overs to her.

When Yin Ziqi sees him, a concoction of emotions arises: surprise, joy, dependence, confusion, shock

"Jinyan. What's the matter?" She grabs hold of his shirt: "What's happened to Yi Yang?"

Bo Jinyan asks her coldly: "Why are you here?"

"A few days ago, Yi Yang said he will be here to go sailing. I am here on business. I thought I'd join him. He said he will be back today."
Bo Jinyan is quiet for a moment: "I think you might need to prepare yourself. He may never return."

Yin Ziqi's face turns pale. Jian Yao is very quiet too.

He is right. Whether it's Lin Yi Yang is or is not the person behind the arson cases, he might never come back."

This is an unexpected turn of events. Yin Ziqi's finance is involved in this case?

Is 'he' someone close to them?

Yin Ziqi's heart is very troubled.

They have been together for five years. Their relationship has been very steady. Both of them regard each other as their future partner for marriage. It is very hard to accept Bo Jinyan's words.

She is not ignorant. She knows that Bo Jinyan only gets involved with big cases. She asks as streams of tear start to flow down her face: "So.... Yi Yang is murdered?"

Bo Jinyan asks the police to leave first, then he answers: "We are not sure. Perhaps he is the killer."

Yin Ziqi can't believe what she is hearing: "What did you say?"

Bo Jinyan is looking at her without any expression on his face. Jian Yao suddenly understands why he said that - he wanted to observe Yin Ziqi's reaction. He wants to know if she is hiding anything.

From what Jian Yao can tell, she doesn't know anything about the case.

Bo Jinyan has obviously reached a conclusion. He softens his voice and says to his sister: "Don't be sad. I know you are a strong woman. I will find him for you. Dead or alive, I will bring him back."

What was intended to be 'words of comfort' by Bo Jinyan is just making Yin Ziqi feel worse. Jian Yao steps forward to console her: "Perhaps the situation is not as bad as we think. Don't worry. Just leave everything to Jinyan."

Yin Ziqi does not reply to Jian Yao. She takes out a packet of tissue. After wiping her tears, she turns to ask Bo Jinyan again: "Tell me, what has happened?"

Bo Jinyan: "I don't have time to explain. The other police officers will fill you in the details. I just need you to answer a question now."

Yin Ziqi nods.

Bo Jinyan looks at her and says in a clear and slow voice: "Flower Cannibal No.2 kissed you. And you have spent a lot of time with Lin Yin Yang. Tell me. Do you notice anything strange about your fiancée? Do they have any similarities?"

Yin Ziqi is shocked to hear what Bo Jinyan is suggesting: "That's impossible. How could you...."

"Are you sure?" Bo Jinyan interrupts her: "Is there anything, no matter how small it seems, that you find unusual about him?"

"No!" This time, it's Yin Ziqi that is cutting him off mid-sentence.

"Jinyan. Sure. We are both very busy people. I don't know everything about him. But you said it. The Flower Cannibal kissed me before. Would I confuse his kiss with my fiancée's kiss?"

This is a typical rich man's villa. Luxurious, refined and elegant. Especially the bedroom, and study, full of touches that reveals the masculinity of its owner. In the middle of the bedroom hangs a large artist self portrait - half body, shirtless, muscular, and with a smile on his handsome face.

Inside the study, Anam connects his laptop onto the computer. Other officers are busy looking around for clues and evidence.

Bo Jinyan stands in front of a window. He puts up the blinds and looks at the ocean that stretches out to the horizon. Jian Yao walks up and ask him softly: "Do you think it's him?"

Bo Jinyan puts down the blinds. He looks at her: "I don't plan to make a conclusion now. But he does fit all the criteria we set for 'him'."

Jian Yao thought about that earlier too - He is close to Yin Ziqi, wealthy, capable of doing what 'he' would have done... But from another angle, he is a normal rich kid with a good qualification and high IQ. Who knows if he is hiding something underneath his charming appearance?

But Jian Yao shakes her hand: "I don't think Lin Yi Yang is him."

Bo Jinyan lifts his brows: "Why? My female detective?"

Jian Yao chuckles. Then she says in a serious voice: "Yin Ziqi is right. If 'he' is Lin Yin Yang, she would know when 'he' kissed her."

Bo Jinyan looks quietly at her, then gives a laugh: "What an interesting view. From a kiss? Unless he has a very distinct bad breath, I don't think it's easy to confuse Yin Ziqi by changing his kissing style."

Jian Yao: 'But I still think....'

"Ok. Let's test it out." He says. He steps forward, grabs her waist and lower his head to kiss her.

A hot and wet scent quickly fills her mouth. But this kiss is different from his usual ones.

His usual kisses start off gentle. He likes to linger for a long time. When he gets passionate, he will suck and lick her, it can be rich, deep and intense, but he is always very patient, and warm toward her.

But now, his hand is squeezing her chin. It's so tight that she is feeling a little painful. His tongue invading greedily, sweeping around the inside of her lips. He even bites her tongue, till it's painful and numb. It's like he's changed to a different person. Powerful, and cruel.

After a while, he lets go of her. Their lips are still wet from the kiss. Her lips are still burning from this short but fiery kiss.

"I don't like this style of kissing. And I don't think you enjoyed it either." He said: "But we have proved a point. Kisses can be used as a disguise."

Jian Yao is just catching her breath back. Then she remembers -

There is someone else in the room!

Even though the kiss is an experiment, but it's still awkward that others would watch them. She turns her head. Surely enough, Anam stands in the other side of the room. He has a surprised look on his face. When their eyes meet, he looks down again to the computers.

Jian Yao blushes. Then she turns to Bo Jinyan and asks: "This style. Did you learn it from a book?"

Bo Jinyan: "There's no need to. I just imagined myself as a ruthless criminal."

Jian Yao smiles: "But you are wrong."

Bo Jinyan frowns at her words.

Jian Yao grabs hold of his shirt and pulls him towards her. She says quietly in his ears: "Whenever you kiss me, you have a habit. At the end of the kiss, your tongue will always curl at the tips, then lick mine from bottom to top. It's a subconscious trick you do every time."

Bo Jinyan is stunned, then he looks down at her.

He thinks for a while, then he smiles: "Ok, you have successfully convinced me. Yin Ziqi and Lin Yi Yang have been lovers for years. They would be very familiar with each other's, and Yin Ziqi is a sharp and observant woman. Based on this, she should be able to tell if those two men are the same person."

Jian Yao nods. It's a relieve to hear that he agrees. The last thing she wants to see is that people she knows are involved in the case.

But then, he says: "It's not a good enough reason to eliminate the possibility that Lin Yi Yang is 'him' yet."

Jian Yao is puzzled: "Why?" But didn't he just admit....

Bo Jinyan has a faint smile: "You have left out a possibility - Split personality."

She thinks about what she has read in the books about split personalities. It's like two people living in one body. They can have completely different likings, characters, and of course personality. So kissing habits and styles can be completely different too.

So it's back to square one again. The truth seems to be hiding behind layers upon layers of fog, and they can't see where they are going.

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Some of the other special team members walk in. They ask Anam: "Any new discoveries?"

Anam: "His motherboard and hard drive is destroyed. I am trying to recover some of the data..." Suddenly he stops and looks at the computer screen.

Everyone looks at him.

He tells everyone: "We have a set of numbers."

On the black screen, there's a few rows of numbers in red. Blood red. And it's arranged in a pattern very familiar to Bo Jinyan and Jian Yao -

"135 / 329

25100 /16

...."

Anam enters the numbers into another analysing programme. Jian Yao turns to look at Bo Jinyan.

The room is very quiet. No one moves.

Jian Yao has a bad feeling about what will happen.

Then Bo Jinyan's face changed when he saw words starting to appear on the screen.

The others in the team don't know about the codes Bo Jinyan received earlier, or anything about the Flower Cannibal. Anam reads out the words on screen: "Say Hello to Jenny."

He looks up: "Who is Jenny?"